

فضائل اعمال

FAZA'IL -E- A'MAAL

Part 6 - VIRTUES
OF RAMADHAAN



فَضَائِلُ أَعْمَالٍ

FAZA'IL - E - A'MAAL

*Shaikhul Hadith Maulana
Muhammed Zakariyya Kaandhlawi*

Part 1 Stories of Sahabah

Part 2 Virtues of The Holy Qur'aan

Part 3 Virtues of Salaat

Part 4 Virtues of Zikr

Part 5 Virtues of Tabligh

Part 6 Virtues of Ramadhann

Part 7 Muslim Denegeration And Its Only Remedy
Maulana Ihtishaamul Hasan Kaandhlawi

Part 8 Six Fundementals
Maulana Aasiq Ilahi

Glossary

Virtues of Ramadhaan



Shaikhul Hadith Maulana Muhammad Zakariyya Saheb
of Saharanpur, India

translated by
Yousuf Abdullah Karaan

ALTAF & SONS

P.O. BOX No. 5882, KARACHI-74000-PAKISTAN

Fax : (92) 21 - 2512774

E-mail : altaf123@hotmail.com

شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنْزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنَاتٍ مِّنَ الْهُدَىٰ وَالْفُرْقَانِ

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FOREWORD

This book is a simple English translation of a famous book in Urdu by Shaikhul -Hadith Maulana Zakariyya of Saharanpur, India.

Maulana Zakariyya (May Allah have mercy on him and grant him a peaceful abode) was one of the world's greatest scholars on Hadith and was undoubtedly one of the greatest spiritual teachers of his age, having thousands of mureeds all over India, Pakistan, Malaya, South Africa, etc. He needs no introduction as an Aalim and spiritual guide since he is following in the footsteps of illustrious sons of Islaam such as Shaikhul-hind Maulana Mahmoodul -Hasan, Maulana Raipuri, Maulana Thanawy, Maulana Madani, Maulana Khalil Ahmad, Maulana 'Uthmaani and Maulana Ilyaas etc. His numerous works in Urdu and Arabic have benefitted millions and have spread far and wide as a result of the activities of the Tablighi Jamaa-ats all over the world.

Because of the beneficial nature of this book we felt that it should be translated into English. This humble effort is being placed before the English speaking public. May Allah accept this work and may it benefit us all. Our fervent duaa' is that Allah grant us the ability to serve Islaam and the Muslims at all times Aameen.

A humble appeal is made to all Tablighi Jamaa-ats and to the Imaams of musjids to read the contents of this book or to arrange for it to be read to congregations for about ten minutes daily, after the Maghrib or 'Ishaa' 'salaah in the weeks preceding Ramadhaan, and during the blessed month at a suitable time so that, In-shaa'Allah, as many Muslims as possible may be inspired to celebrate Ramadhaan in the most rewarding manner, Aameen.

Yusuf Karaan

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
نَحْمَدُهُ وَنُصَلِّي عَلَى رَسُولِهِ الْكَرِيمِ حَامِدًا وَمُصَلِّيًا وَمُسَلِّمًا

INTRODUCTION

All praise is for Allah and blessings be upon His chosen Messenger.

In the following pages I have quoted a few Ahaadith with the reference to the blessed month of Ramadhaan. The Holy Prophet (May Allah's choicest blessings be upon him) has urged us in these Ahaadith to mend our lives by acquiring the great virtues and blessings of this month. True appreciation would be that we fully carry out these teachings. Our negligence, in these days has become so marked that we neither act upon his advice nor pay any heed to it, so much so that very few of us even know about the great good we can obtain therefrom.

My object in collecting these Ahaadith in this book is to assist the Imaams of musjids, leaders of Taraaweeh 'salaah and other well-read Muslims who have the interest of our Deen at heart, to read out and explain this book in the masjid during the first few days of Ramadhaan (or before) so that through Allah's great mercy and the blessings of His beloved, we may pay due attention to it and receive Allah's blessings during this sacred month. This can lead us towards acting on His commands and keep us away from evil deeds.

Rasulullah ﷺ said, "Should Allah guide one person aright through you, that shall be better for you than a red camel (something that is pricey, and also considered a most precious possession)."

Ramadhaan is for the Muslims a very great favour. This favour can only be considered as such if we appreciate it, otherwise Ramadhaan will come and go without us gaining anything.

It is stated in the Hadith "If my Ummah realise what Ramadhaan really is, they would wish that the whole year should just be Ramadhaan." Every person knows that fasting for a full year is a very difficult task, and only because

of the great reward for Ramadhaan mentioned by Rasulallah ﷺ will they desire the full year to be Ramadhaan. In another Hadith we are told, "The fasting of Ramadhaan and fasting three days of every month keeps evil away from the heart."

The Sahaabah (companions) of Rasulallah ﷺ used to fast even during jihaad and on weary, tiresome journeys, inspite of having obtained permission from Rasulallah ﷺ to break their fast. In the end Rasulallah ﷺ had to prohibit them from fasting. So much did they exert themselves for not wanting to lose the blessings. Imaam Muslim reports that the Sahaabah were once on a journey for jihaad. It was extremely hot and due to poverty they did not even have a cloth for shade to protect themselves against the heat. In this condition they stopped at one place, while many of them used their hands for protection against the heat. In this condition too, many were fasting. They were so overcome with weakness that they could not bear the excessive heat and fell down. (Some Sahaabah fasted throughout the year).

There are many Ahaadith in which the blessings of Ramadhaan are explained. It is not possible for me to collect them all here, and if I am to enumerate and explain them all in detail then readers may become bored. However, now is the time to refresh our mind with them. After all one need not explain how disinterested we have become in our Deen. It is a self-evident truth.

I have mentioned only twenty-one Ahaadith in this book and have divided them into three chapters.

- (a) Chapter one, on the Virtues of Ramadhaan (Ten Ahaadith)
- (b) Chapter two, on Laylatul Qadr (Seven Ahaadith)
- (c) Chapter three, on I'tikaaf (three Ahaadith)

At the end by way of ending this book, I have included one long Hadith. May Allah accept this work through His Grace and the blessings of His beloved Rasulallah, Muhammad ﷺ and grant me and all Muslims the hidaayah to derive benefit from it. Most surely He is the Good, The Generous and most kind. Aameen.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

CHAPTER ONE

THE VIRTUES OF RAMADHAAN

(١) عَنْ سَلْمَانَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ قَالَ عَظَّمْنَا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ فِي آخِرِ يَوْمٍ مِنْ شَعْبَانَ فَقَالَ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ قَدْ أَطْلَكُمُ شَهْرَ عَظِيمٍ مُبَارَكٍ شَهْرٌ فِيهِ لَيْلَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِنْ أَلْفِ شَهْرٍ ، شَهْرٌ جَعَلَ اللَّهُ صِيَامَهُ فَرِيضَةً وَقِيَامَ لَيْلِهِ طُغْرًا مَنْ تَقَرَّبَ فِيهِ بِخَصَلَةٍ كَانَ كَمَنْ أَدَّى فَرِيضَةً فِيمَا سِوَاهُ وَمَنْ أَدَّى فَرِيضَةً فِيهِ كَانَ كَمَنْ أَدَّى سِتِينَ فَرِيضَةً فِيمَا سِوَاهُ ، وَهُوَ شَهْرُ الصَّبْرِ وَالصَّبْرُ ثَوَابُهُ الْجَنَّةُ وَشَهْرُ الْمَوَاسِقِ وَشَهْرُ يُزَادُ فِي رِزْقِ الْمُؤْمِنِ فِيهِ ، مَنْ فَطَرَ فِيهِ صَائِمًا كَانَ مَغْفِرَةً لِدُؤُوبِهِ وَعِثْقٌ رَقَبَتِهِ مِنَ النَّارِ وَكَانَ لَهُ مِثْلُ أَجْرِهِ مَنْ غَيْرَ أَنْ يُنْقَصَ مِنْ أَجْرِهِ شَيْءٌ قَالُوا يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ لَيْسَ كُلُّنَا يَجِدُ مَا يَفْطُرُ الصَّائِمِ فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ يُعْطَى اللَّهُ هَذَا الثَّوَابَ مَنْ فَطَرَ صَائِمًا عَلَى ثَمَرَةٍ أَوْ شَرْبَةٍ مَاءٍ أَوْ مَذْقَةٍ لَبَنٍ وَهُوَ شَهْرٌ أَوَّلُهُ رَحْمَةٌ وَأَوْسَطُهُ مَغْفِرَةٌ وَآخِرُهُ عِثْقٌ مِنَ النَّارِ مَنْ خَفَّفَ عَنْ مَمْلُوكِهِ فِيهِ غَفَرَ اللَّهُ لَهُ وَأَعْتَقَهُ مِنَ النَّارِ وَاسْتَكْفَرُوا فِيهِ مِنْ أَرْبَعِ خِصَالٍ خَصَلَتَيْنِ تُرْضَوْنَ بِهِمَا رَبُّكُمْ وَخَصَلَتَيْنِ لَا تُغْنِيَا بِكُمْ عَنْهُمَا فَأَمَّا الْخَصْلَتَانِ اللَّتَانِ تُرْضَوْنَ بِهِمَا رَبُّكُمْ فَشَهَادَةُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَتَسْتَغْفِرُونَ لَهُ ، وَأَمَّا الْخَصْلَتَانِ اللَّتَانِ لَا غِنَاءَ بِكُمْ عَنْهُمَا فَتَسْتَلُونَ اللَّهَ الْجَنَّةَ وَتَعُوذُونَ بِهِ مِنَ النَّارِ وَمَنْ سَقَى صَائِمًا سَقَاةً اللَّهُ مِنْ حَوْضِي شَرْبَةٍ لَا يَظْمَأُ حَتَّى يَدْخُلَ الْجَنَّةَ رَوَاهُ ابْنُ خُرَيْمٍ فِي صَحِيحِهِ وَقَالَ ابْنُ جَدْعَانَ وَرَوَاهُ ابْنُ خُرَيْمٍ أَيْضًا وَابْنُ أَبِي حَيَّانٍ فِي الثَّوَابِ بِإِخْتِصَارٍ عَنْهُمَا وَفِي أَصَانِيدِهِمْ عَلَى بَنِ زَيْدٍ كَذَا فِي التَّرْغِيبِ ص ٢٠٣ قُلْتُ عَلَى بَنِ زَيْدٍ ضَعُفَهُ جَمَاعَةٌ وَقَالَ التِّرْمِذِيُّ صَدُوقٌ وَصَحَّحَ لَهُ حَدِيثًا فِي السَّلَامِ وَحَسَنَ لَهُ غَيْرَ مَا حَدِيثٍ وَكَذَا كَثِيرٌ ضَعُفَهُ النَّسَائِيُّ وَغَيْرُهُ وَقَالَ ابْنُ مَعِينٍ ثَقَّةٌ وَقَالَ ابْنُ عَدَى لَمْ أَرِ بِحَدِيثِهِ بَأْسًا وَأَخْرَجَ بِحَدِيثِهِ ابْنُ خُرَيْمٍ فِي صَحِيحِهِ كَذَا فِي رِجَالِ الْمُتَنَزِّلِ ص ٧٠٤ لَكِنْ قَالَ الْعَيْنِيُّ الْخَيْرُ مِنْكَرٍ تَقَابُلٍ

HADITH NO. 1

Salmaan رضي الله عنه reports, "On the last day of Sha-baan Rasulullah ﷺ addressed us and said, 'O people there comes over you now a great month, a most blessed month in which lies a night more greater in virtue than a thousand months. It is a month in which Allah has made fasting compulsory by day. And has made sunnah the Taraaweeh by night. Whosoever intends drawing near to Allah by performing any virtuous deed, for such person shall be the reward like the one who had performed a fardh in any other time. And whoever performs a fardh, shall be blessed with the reward of seventy faraa-idh in any other time.

This is indeed the month of patience, and the reward for true patience is Jannah (paradise). It is the month of sympathy with one's fellowmen. It is the month wherein a true believer's rizq is increased. Whosoever feeds another who fasted, in order to break the fast (at sunset), for the feeder there shall be forgiveness of sins and emancipation from the fire of Jahannam (hell), and for such feeder shall be the same reward as the one who fasted (who he fed) without that persons reward being decreased in the least."

Thereupon we said, "O messenger of Allah, not all of us possess the means whereby we can give a fasting person to break his fast." Rasulullah ﷺ replied, "Allah grants the same reward to the one who gives a fasting person to break the fast a mere date, or a drink of water, or a sip of milk."

"This is a month, the first of which brings Allah's mercy, the middle of which brings His forgiveness and the last of which brings emancipation from the fire of Jahan-nam."

"Whosoever lessens the burden of his servants (bondsmen) in this month, Allah will forgive him and free him from the fire of Jahannam."

"And in this month four things you should continue to perform in great number, two of which shall be to please your Lord, while the other two shall be those without which you cannot do. Those which shall be to please your Lord, are that you should in great quantity bear witness that there is no deity to worship except Allah (i.e. recite

the Kalimah Tayyibah *Laa Ilāaha illallāh*) and make much *Istighfaar* (beg Allah's forgiveness with *Astaghfirullah*).” And as for those without which you cannot do, you should beg of Allah, entrance into paradise and ask refuge in Him from *Jahannam*.”

“And whoever gave a person who fasted water to drink, Allah shall grant that giver to drink from My fountain, such a drink whereafter that person shall never again feel thirsty until he enters *Jannah*.”

Reported by ibn Khuzaimah in his 'Saheeh.

COMMENTARY

All the points which this Hadith draws attention have been further emphasised in numerous other Ahaadith on the great virtues of Ramadhāan. Quite a number of important points are brought to our notice.

Firstly, it should be noted that Rasulullah ﷺ delivered this sermon at the end of the month of Sha-baan the obvious reason being that he intended to put into our minds the great importance of Ramadhāan so that we could remember and not allow one second of this month to go by without giving it the full importance it deserves. Thereafter attention is drawn to Laylatul Qadr, about which more is said later. Then attention is drawn to the fact that fasting has been made compulsory by Allah who also made sunnah the Taraaweeh 'salaah by night.

From this Hadith it is noted that the command for Taraaweeh prayers too comes from Allah Himself. Besides this in all the Ahaadith wherein Rasulullah ﷺ says, “I have made it sunnah”, is mainly to emphasize its importance. All the authorities of the Ahlus sunnah wal Jamaa'ah are agreed upon the fact that Taraaweeh is sunnah. (Burhaan mentions that only the Rawaafidh deny this.)

Maulana Shaah Abdulhaq Dehlawi wrote in his book: “Maa Thabata Bis sunnah” that should the people of any town fail to perform Taraaweeh prayers, the Muslim ruler should make them do so by force.

Here one point should be noted. Many are of the opinion that one may listen to the full Qur'aan being recited in

a certain musjid in eight or ten nights and then stop performing Taraaweeh with Jamaa-ah. Thereafter the virtue of the sunnah will have been attained. This is wrong. By doing this the one sunnah will be fulfilled and the other omitted. There are two things. Firstly, it is sunnah to hear the full Qur'aan being recited in the Taraaweeh in Ramadhaan. Secondly, it is sunnah to perform Taraaweeh with Jamaa-ah throughout Ramadhaan. Both should be performed with care.

As for those who are travelling and are unable to perform both sunnah, because of uncertainty as to where they will be, (at different places), then for them it is advisable that in the first few days of Ramadhaan they should have the full Quraan read in Taraaweeh so that the recitation is complete. Then they should attend Taraaweeh wherever they find the opportunity. In this way the Qur'aan will also be completed and their work will not be hampered.

Another point that is brought to our notice in the Ha-dith is that Rasulullah ﷺ informed us that any nafl deed in Ramadhaan is rewarded as much as a fardh in normal times, and a fardh in Ramadhaan carries the reward of seventy faraa'idh at other times.

Our Faults

At this point we should ponder over our ibaadah. How much importance do we attach to it in Ramadhaan? How many nafl do we perform? As for fardh deeds, we observe how numerous people who after having eaten sah'ri get back into bed with the result that the Fajr 'salaah is neglected. Many perform it, but not with Jamaa'ah. It gives the impression that we give thanks to Allah for the food we had eaten for sah'ri by not performing the most important fardh or by not performing it with Jamaa'ah. Such a 'salaah has been termed defective. Rasulullah ﷺ said that, "There is no 'salaah for those near the musjid except in the musjid".

In the kitaab 'Mazhaahire Haq' we find that there is no reward for the 'salaah for persons who do not perform 'salaah with Jamaa'ah without any valid reason or excuse.

Similarly, in numerous cases at the time of if'taar (boeka) Maghrib 'salaah is missed, and many who do not come to the musjid miss the Takbeer at the beginning or

miss the first raka'ah. Many people hasten to get over the Taraaweeh 'salaah early and even perform the 'Ishaa' 'salaah before the time of 'Ishaa' commences. (Some do not pay any attention to 'salaah even in Ramadhaan.)

That is the way we look after our very important fardh 'salaah in Ramadhaan. Sometimes in the process of performing one fardh, three others are destroyed. How often do we see even the time of Zhuh-r 'salaah going by because we are asleep, while time of A'sr goes by because we are too busy buying, selling or cooking to prepare for if'taar.

If such is the case with the faraa'idh, then we can imagine how much less importance is given to the nafl actions. One finds that because of sleep, the time of 'salaatul Ishraaq (after sunrise) and 'salaatud Dhuhaa (before noon) go by. Then what about 'salaat Awwaabeen (just after Maghrib)? Here we find ourselves busy with If'taar and when thinking about Taraaweeh after about an hour this 'salaah too is wasted. Further we find that for 'salaatut Tahajjud the time is the same as that for sah'ri with the result that this too goes by. One may make a thousand excuses for not finding time for these nawaafil. These are all excuses for not performing these 'salaah.

We see that there are many who do find the time to do all these 'ibaadahs during these precious moments. I personally had observed my ustaaz Maulana Khalil Ahmad during many a Ramadhaan. He was a weak sickly person and of advanced age but inspite of these drawbacks he used to read one and a quarter juz of the Qur'an in nafl namaaz after Maghrib. Thereafter he used to have meals for about half an hour. After performing all other necessities in preparation for Taraaweeh 'salaah he used to stand in Taraaweeh for about two and a half hours when he was in India, and when he was in Madinah Munawwarah the duration was three hours. Thereafter he used to sleep about two or three hours (according to the season). Then he used to again recite the Qur'aan in Tahajjud 'saalah until about half an hour before Fajr. Then he ate sah'ri. From that time until Fajr he remained busy with reading the Qur'aan or reciting of wazifas. With the greyness of dawn he performed Fajr 'salaah, thereafter he remained in meditation (muraaqabah) until Ishraaq. Having performed Ishraaq he used to write his famous kitaab, 'Bazlul Majhood', commentary on

Abu Dawood. Then he normally attend to letters and dictating replies up to mid-day. Then he used to rest upto Zhuh-r 'salaah. Between Zhuh-r and A'sr he used to recite the Qur'aan.

From A'sr Namaaz until Maghrib he used to be busy with tasbeeh and answering the queries of those who visited him. When he completed 'Bazlul Majhood' then part of the morning used to be spent in tilaawah and studying some monumental religious works, especially Bazlul Majhood and Wafa al Wafa. This was his daily programme for nafl 'ibaadah throughout the year. In Ramadhaan however, he used to spend a bit more time in his 'ibaadah, making the rak'aats longer. For the ordinary person to observe the special programmes the other pious elders had for Ramadhaan would be difficult. Shaikhul Hind Maulana Mahmoodul Hasan (Rahmatullah alaihi) used to remain in nafl 'salaah from after Taraaweeh until Fajr, while also listening to the Qur'aan recited by various huffaazh one after the other.

Maulana Shah Abdurraheem Raipuri (d 1963) remained busy with tilaawah (recitation) of the Qur'aan day and night through Ramadhaan. There used to be no time for attending to correspondence or meeting visitors. Only his special ones were allowed to wait on him after Taraaweeh for a short period while he drank a cup of tea.

Advice

The reason for mentioning the manner in which these saintly ones spent their Ramadhaan is not that we may just read without deriving any benefit or pass a casual remark. It is written with the object that we in our way may build up courage and to the best of our ability endeavour to copy and follow their noble examples. Every pious elders programme had its particular speciality. How wonderful would it be if those who are not forced by wordly necessities, try their utmost to mend their religious life in this one month after having allowed eleven months of the year go by to destroy themselves.

As for those who have to be in their offices and be present at eight, nine or ten in the morning, what difficulty will it be for them if they at least in Ramadhaan, spend the time from Fajr until their hours of employment in reciting

the Qur'aan. After all our wordly needs we do find time in spite of office hours.

For those engaged in farming, who normally are not bound to others nothing prevents them from reciting the Qur'aan on their farm or adjusting their daily routine. Then come the businessmen, shopkeepers and merchants. Nothing prevents them in Ramadhaan from reciting their Qur'aan during their shop hours or cutting short trading time in order to make time for recitation thereof. After all there is very strong link between Ramadhaan and the Tilaa-wah of the Qur'aan. Almost all Allah's great scriptures were revealed in this month. Similarly, in this month the Qur'aan was brought down from the Lowhul Mahfoozh to the Samaa'ud Dunyaa, from where it was revealed bit by bit to Rasulullah ﷺ in a span of twenty three years.

Nabi Ibrahim (A.S.) received his scriptures on the first and third of this sacred month. Nabi Dawood (A.S.) received the Zaboor on the twelfth or eighteenth. Nabi Moosa (A.S.) received his Towrah on the sixth. Nabi Essa (A.S.) received the Injeel on the twelfth or thirteenth. From this we note the great connection between the divine scriptures and the month of Ramadhaan. For this reason, as much tilaaawah of the Qur'aan as possible should be made during this month. Such was the habit of our saints. Jibraeel (A.S.) used to recite the whole Qur'aan to our Nabi Muhammad ﷺ in the month of Ramadhaan. In some reports it is stated that Rasulullah ﷺ used to recite and he (Jibraeel) used to listen. From joining these reports the 'ulama have said that it is mustahab to read the Qur'aan in such a manner that while one recites the other listens. Thereafter another recites while others listen. So recite the Qur'aan as much as possible. Whatever time remains thereafter should not be wasted.

Rasulullah ﷺ drew our attention to four more things and advised that we should practice them as much as possible. They are the recitation of Kalimah 'Tayyibah, Istighfaar, begging for Jannah and seeking refuge from Jannah. Therefore it must be regarded an honour to spend as much as available in these recitations. This will be the true appreciation of the teachings of Rasulullah ﷺ. What is so difficult about keeping the tongue busy with the recitation of Durood ('salawaat) or Laa ilaaha illallaah while being engaged in our daily tasks?

In the same Hadith Rasulullah ﷺ said a few more things, Ramadhaan is the month of patience. Hence even if great difficulty is experienced in fasting one should bear it with patience. One should not complain as people are fond of doing during hot days. If by chance sah-ri is missed then lamentations begin early in the day. Similarly, should difficulty be experienced at the same time of Taraweeh, it too should be borne with patience. Do not consider it a great calamity or trial, otherwise these deeds may be void of blessings. When we turn our backs on worldly things, forsake our very eating and drinking, then in the face of Allah's pleasure what are these difficulties?

Sympathy for the unfortunate

Further, the Hadith states that it is the month of sympathy, especially for the poor and destitute. Sympathy should be of a practical nature. When ten things are placed before us for if'taar, at least two or four of them should be set aside for the poor and needy. In fact they should be treated preferentially, if not then at least equally. They should certainly be remembered. In showing sympathy for the poor, as in all other matters, the Sahaabah R.A. were living examples, and in this, it is our duty to follow or at least try to follow them. In the matter of sacrifice and sympathy only the courageous can emulate the Sahaabah. There are numerous instances, if they are cited, will only leave one in astonishment.

Let us see the following example, Abu Jahm رضی اللہ عنہ relates that: "During the battle of Yarmouk he went in search of his cousins, taking with him a water bag to give him to drink and also wash his wounds if he was found alive or wounded. He found him lying among the wounded. When I asked him whether he wanted some water, he indicated 'yes'. At that moment someone near him moaned. My cousin pointed to that person indicating that I should first quench the thirst of the neighbour. I went to him and found that he too needed water, but just as I was about to give him water, a third person groaned near him. The second one pointed to this third person meaning that I should give the third one to drink first. I went to the third person but before he could drink, I found out that he had passed away, whereupon I returned to the second one only to find that he too had passed away. When I came to my counsin, he too had become a martyr".

This is the type of sympathetic character our forefathers had. They preferred to die while thirsty rather than to drink before a strange Muslim brother. May Allah be pleased with them all and grant us ability to follow in their footsteps.

Roohul Bayaan quotes from Imaam Suyuti's Jaam'i 'Sagheer and Imam Sakhaawi's Maqaasid the narration of Hadhrat Umar that Nabi ﷺ said, "At all times my ummah there will be five hundred chosen servants and forty abdaal (pious ones, totally devoted to Allah). When anyone of these passes away then immediately he is succeeded by another." The Sahaabah inquired, "What are exclusive deeds? Rasulullah ﷺ replied, 'They overlook the injustices of the transgressors, and they show kindness to those who illtreat them, and from the sustenance provided for them by Allah, they engender sympathy and graciousness.'

In another Hadith it is stated that whosoever feeds the hungry, clothes the naked, and grants shelter to the traveller, Allah shall save him from the terrors of Qiyaamah.

Yahya Barmaki used to grant Imaam Sufyaan Thowri one thousand Dirhams every month, whereupon Imaam Sufyaan used to prostrate himself before Allah praying "O Allah Yahya has seen sufficiently to my wordly needs. See You, through Your Great Mercy, to his necessities in the Hereafter." After the death of Yahya some people saw him in their dreams and on inquiring what had happened to him in the hereafter, he replied: "Through the prayers of 'Sufyaan I have been forgiven by Allah".

Further, Rasulullah ﷺ mentioned the virtue of feeding a fasting person at the time of breaking the fast. In one Hadith it is reported that upon him who feeds a person to break the fast out of his halaal earnings, the angels confer mercy upon him during the nights of Ramadhaan, and on the night of Laylatul Qadr Jibraeel shakes hands with him. The signs of this is that his heart becomes soft while tears flow from his eyes.

Hammaad bin Salamah, a very famous Muhaddith used to feed fifty people every day during Ramadhaan at if'taar. (Roohul Bayaan)

Thereafter the Hadith of Rasulullah ﷺ called the

first section of **Ramadhān** the coming of mercy, whereby it is meant that Allah's favour is with the believers. Those who are thankful to Allah for His bounties, receive even more. The Qu'raan says, "If you are thankful, I will surely grant you more." (Surah 14:7)

During the second section of **Ramadhān** forgiveness begins to descend as a reward for the fasting during the first section. The last section of the **Ramadhān** brings immunity from entrance in **Jahannam**. This is corroborated by many similar **Aḥādith**. In my personal opinion, **Ramadhān** has been divided into three sections because people are normally of three different kinds. Firstly, there are those who have no burden of sins. For them Allah's Mercy and Bounties descend from the very beginning of **Ramadhān**. Secondly, there are those whose burden of sins are not too heavy. For them forgiveness descends after one third of **Ramadhān** has passed. Thirdly, there are the real sinners. For them forgiveness comes after having fasted the major section of **Ramadhān**. As those who attained Allah's Mercy right at the beginning, they are the very fortunate ones because of the great amount of mercy they have received. (And Allah knows best).

Another point mentioned in the **Aḥādith** is that masters should be lenient to their servants in **Ramadhān** because, after all, they too are fasting. Unnecessary hard work or too much of it will be a burden for them. So why should an extra worker not be hired when the work is too much? That of course only applies when the servant himself fasts, otherwise there is no difference for them between **Ramadhān** and any other month.

Words cannot describe the position of the shameless oppressor who does not himself fast and drives his employees unnecessarily, and if there is any delay due to 'salaah or fasting he is outraged. Regarding such persons the Qur'aan states, "And soon the oppressor will come to know where his abode is. (In **Jahannam**)

Lastly, in the **Hadith** **Rasulullah** ﷺ exhorted that four things should be repeated constantly. Firstly the recitation of **Kalimah 'Tayyibah**, which in the **Aḥādith** is called the highest form of **thikr**. In "**Mishkaat**" **Abu Sa'iyd Khudri** reports, "Once **Nabi Moosa** (Alayhis Salaam) begged of Allah to grant him a special prayer by which he can remember Allah and also (by which he could) ask

Him". Then Allah informed him to recite this kalimah. Sayyidina Moosa said, "O Allah, this is a verse recited by all your servants, I desire a special prayer". Allah replied, "O Moosa, if the seven heavens, the earth and all its occupants including the angels, except Myself are placed on one side of a scale and this kalimah on the other, then this kalimah will outweigh everything".

In another Hadith it is stated, "Should anyone sincerely recite this kalimah, the doors of Jannah open up for him immediately and nothing can stop him from reaching Allah's Throne". The only condition is that the reciter should refrain from major sins.

Allah's pattern is that He grants basic needs in abundance. We see all over the world that whatever is generally required is found in abundance. For example, water which is a basic necessity. How common has Allah, in His infinite mercy, made this basic necessity. And how rare has he made the unmeaningful use of alchemy. Similarly the Kalimah 'Tayyibah' is the most excellent form of thikr. Allah has made it common to humanity, so that none is deprived of it. Hence if any person is deprived of it, it is only due to his misfortune. There are numerous Ahaadith regarding its virtues and for the sake of brevity they are not mentioned here.

The second of which a lot should be recited is Istighfaar. The Ahaadith report the virtue of Istighfaar and in one Hadith we read, "Whoever says much Istighfaar, Allah opens an exit for him from all difficulties and releases him from all sorrows. In a similar manner he receives rizq from unexpected sources". In another Hadith Rasulullah ﷺ said that, "Every man is a sinner, but the best among the sinners are those who repent and seek forgiveness". We will soon mention a Hadith where in it is mentioned that, "When a man commits a sin, a black spot forms on his heart, but when he repents, it is washed away—if not, the black spot remains". Thereafter Rasulullah commanded us to beseech two things without which we cannot do, to beg Allah for entrance into Jannah and to seek refuge in Him from Jahannam.

May Allah grant you and I this good fortune.

(٢) عَنْ أَبِي مُرَّةٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ أُعْطِيتُ أُمْنِي خَمْسَ خِصَالٍ فِي رَمَضَانَ لَمْ تُعْطَهُنَّ أُمَّةً قَبْلَهُمْ خُلُوفٌ فَمِ الصَّائِمِ أَطْيَبُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ مِنْ رِيحِ الْمِسْكِ وَتُسْتَغْفَرُ لَهُمُ الْحَيَاتَانِ حَتَّى يَفْطُرُوا وَيُزَيَّنَ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ كُلَّ نَفْسٍ جَنَّتْ ثُمَّ يَقُولُ يُوْثِقُ عِبَادِي الصَّالِحُونَ أَنْ يُلْقُوا عَنْهُمْ الْمَوْتَةَ وَيَصِيرُوا إِلَيْكَ وَلَصَفَدَ فِيهِ مَرْدَةُ الشَّيَاطِينِ فَلَا يَخْلُصُونَ فِيهِ إِلَى مَا كَانُوا يَخْلُصُونَ إِلَيْهِ فِي غَيْرِهِ وَيُغْفَرُ لَهُمْ فِي آخِرِ لَيْلِهِ قِيلَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ أَمَى لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ قَالَ لَا وَلَكِنَّ الْعَامِلَ إِنْ مَا يَوْفَى أَجْرُهُ إِذَا قَضَى عَمَلَهُ رَوَاهُ أَحْمَدُ وَالْبَزَارُ وَابْنُ أَبِي وَرَوَاهُ أَبُو الشَّيْخِ ابْنُ حَبَانَ فِي كِتَابِ الثَّوَابِ إِلَّا أَنْ عِنْدَهُ وَتُسْتَغْفَرُ لَهُمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ بِدَلِّ الْحَيَاتَانِ ، كَذَا فِي التَّرغِيبِ

HADITH NO. 2

Abu Hurayrah relates that Rasulullah ﷺ said, "My Ummah were given five things for Ramadhāan which were not given to anyone except them. For them, the smell from the mouth of a fasting person is more sweeter to Allah than the fragrant smell of musk. On their behalf the fish in the sea seek forgiveness for the fasting persons until they break their fast. Allah prepares and decorates a special garden in Jannah everyday and then says (to it), "The time is near when faithful servants shall cast aside the great trials of the world and come to you". In this month (for them) evil-minded Shaytaan is chained so as not to reach unto those evils to which they normally reach during other months besides Ramadhāan. On the last night of Ramadhāan they are forgiven".

The Sahaabah R.A. thereupon enquired, "O Messenger of Allah, is that last night Laylatul Qadr? Rasulullah ﷺ replied, "No. But it is only right that a servant should be given his reward on having completed his service".

Reported by Ahmad, Bazaar and Bayhaqi

COMMENTARY

Rasulullah ﷺ mentions in Hadith five such presents from Allah which were not granted to the fasting people before Islaam. If only we can truly appreciate how great this bounty from Allah really is, and if only we could

sincerely try to gain those special favours: Firstly, we are told that the smell from the mouth of a fasting one is more beloved and sweeter to Allah than the smell of musk. The commentators attach eight meanings to this. Of these, in my opinion, three are the most acceptable explanations; (a) Some are of the opinion that in the Hereafter Allah shall reward that smell from the mouth with fragrant smells more sweet and pleasing than musk. This is the obvious meaning. Durrul Manthoor has also concluded thus, therefore this appear to be the preferred explanation. (b) On the day of Qiyaamah, when we shall rise from the grave, a sweet smell shall emanate, from the mouth of those who fasted, which shall be better than musk. (c) The version which in my opinion is most acceptable, is the view that in the world the smell is more fragrant than musk. This shows the bond of love between Allah and His fasting creation.

We all know that even a bad smell from a person whom one loves truly and sincerely is in itself-regarded favourably by the lover, who in this case is Allah Himself. Allah wants to grant the fasting one complete closeness, that so he becomes like the beloved one. Fasting is one of the most accepted forms of 'ibaadah in Allah's sight. For this reason the Hadith states that the reward for every deed is carried by the angels, but Allah says, "The reward for fasting, I Myself will give, because it is for Me alone". Another version of the same Hadith according to some Mashaa'ikh (when read in a different way) says, "I Myself become his reward". And what greater reward can there be for the lover than to gain the beloved? In one Hadith we read, "Fasting is the door to all other forms of 'ibaadah". This means that through fasting the heart becomes enlightened through which one is encouraged towards all other 'i'baadah. This is the case only if fasting becomes fasting in the true sense of the word and all its requirements (as shall be explained later), and not just remaining hungry and thirsty.

NOTE: At this juncture I wish to draw attention to one point, because of this Hadith some Imaams (especially Imaam Shafi'iy) prohibited cleansing of the teeth with miswaak in the afternoon, whereas the Hanafis consider it to be mustahab at all times. The Imaam's reason is that through miswaak the smell from the teeth is removed. The odour referred to here is the smell resulting from the stomach being empty, having nothing to do with miswaak.

The second special favour is that fish in the sea make Istighfaar for the one who fasts. The aim here is to explain that many beings offer prayer on his behalf. This point has been mentioned in many Ahaadith. And in some Ahaadith it is mentioned that the Malaa'ikah (angels) make Istighfaar for them. My uncle Maulana Muhammad Ilyas used to say that this is apparently so because Allah says in the Qur'aan, "Verily those who believe and do righteous deeds, Allah shall make them beloved (in this world)". One Hadith clarifies this, "When Allah loves a person, He says to Jibrael A.S. 'I love this person, you should also love him'. Jibrael A.S. then also loves that person and announces in the heavens, "That such a person is loved by Allah. You all should love him". Thereupon all the dwellers of the heavens begin to love him. Then, love for that person spreads on earth". Normally only those who are near to a person seem to love him but here that love spreads all over, even the animals in the jungle and the fish in the sea do the same. They all pray for him.

The third favour bestowed on the fasting ones is that Jannah becomes decorated for them. Another Hadith states that at the beginning of every year, the decoration and adornment of Jannah begins for the coming Ramadhaan. We know that when a well known person is expected to arrive, great care is taken in the preparations for his coming. At the time of marriage for example, preparations commence months in advance. Likewise it is with Ramadhaan.

The fourth favour is that the rebellious, evil sowing shayaa'teen are chained (detained), as a result of which evil is diminished. One would expect that because of the great desire, for ibaadah in the blessed month of Ramadhaan, shay'taan would try just as hard to pull the faithful from their path so that much more evil would be committed. That is not the case. On the contrary we see so much less evil. How many drunkards do we not see, who, just because of the blessed month of Ramadhaan, do not drink. How many other evil doers do we not see casting aside evil just because of the blessed month of Ramadhaan. Committing sins during the month of Ramadhaan does not contradict the meaning of the Hadith, because the Hadith mentions only the rebellious shayaa'teen. Thus sin could be due to the influence of the non-rebellious shayaa'teen. In some Ahaadith the chaining of the shay'taan is not

qualified, but this could be qualified by those Ahaadith in which the 'rebellious' shay'taan is mentioned. A question may arise here, that when the shayaa'teen are chained, how is it that we still see evil committed even though to a lesser degree? Our reply is that evil may not necessarily be caused by the Shayaa'teen. Having for eleven months lived in obedience to shay'taan's whims and wishes and because of the performance of deeds advised by him having become second nature to us, evil is done in and out of Ramadhaan. Thus even though shay'taan has been chained his influence in us has become so strong that we follow his path on our own.

Another answer to the question is Rasulullah ﷺ said that, "When a person commits a sin, a black spot forms on his heart. When he sincerely repents, it is removed, otherwise it remains. When he again commits a sin another spot forms until his heart becomes completely black. Thereafter no good can reach his heart". With reference to this Allah says in the Qur'aan, "By no means. But on their heart is the stain (of the ill)". That their hearts have become totally rusted. In such cases these hearts have a natural inclination towards sin. This is the reason why many fearlessly commit one type of sin, but yet if confronted with another sin of similar magnitude then their hearts repudiate it. Whereas in sin these two misdeeds are equal similarly when these sins are constantly committed out of Ramadhaan the heart is tainted by them, thus resulting in these sins being committed without the presence of the shay'taan. My personal opinion is that not all shayaa'teen are chained. Only the most rebellious ones are. All of us can see in Ramadhaan it does not require a great amount of effort and exertion to do a good deed. Neither does it require great self control and sacrifice to avoid evil as in other times. Maulana Shaah Ishaq was of the opinion that for the evil ones only the most rebellious shayaa'teen are chained whereas for the righteous ones all shayaa'teen are chained.

The fifth favour is that forgiveness is granted on the final night of Ramadhaan (see previous Hadith), because of this great favour the Sahaabah thought this night must be Laylatul Qadr. They knew the great blessings of that night and accordingly asked whether that was Laylatul Qadr.

The reply was that it was not. This is merely the favour granted for having given Ramadhaan its due right to the end.

(٣) عَنْ كَعْبِ بْنِ عُجْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ أَخْضَرُوا الْمِنْبَرَ فَحَضَرْنَا فَلَمَّا ارْتَقَى دَرَجَةً قَالَ آمِينَ فَلَمَّا ارْتَقَى الدَّرَجَةَ الثَّانِيَةَ قَالَ آمِينَ فَلَمَّا ارْتَقَى الدَّرَجَةَ الثَّالِثَةَ قَالَ آمِينَ فَلَمَّا نَزَلَ قُلْنَا يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ لَقَدْ سَمِعْنَا مِنْكَ الْيَوْمَ شَيْئًا مَا كُنَّا نَسْمَعُهُ قَالَ إِنَّ جِبْرِئِيلَ عَرَضَ لِي فَقَالَ بَعْدَ مَنْ أَذْرَكَ رَمَضَانَ فَلَمْ يُغْفَرْ لَهُ قُلْتُ آمِينَ فَلَمَّا رَقِيتُ الثَّانِيَةَ قَالَ بَعْدَ مَنْ ذُكِرْتَ عِنْدَهُ فَلَمْ يُصَلِّ عَلَيْكَ قُلْتُ آمِينَ فَلَمَّا رَقِيتُ الثَّالِثَةَ قَالَ بَعْدَ مَنْ أَذْرَكَ أَبَوَيْهِ الْكَبِيرَ عِنْدَهُ أَوْ أَحَدَهُمَا فَلَمْ يَدْخِلْهُ الْجَنَّةَ قُلْتُ آمِينَ رواه الحاكم وقال صحيح الإسناد وكذا في الترغيب وقال السخاوى رواه ابن حبان في ثقاته وصححه والطبرانى في الكبير والبخارى في بر الوالدين له والبيهقى في الشعب وغيرهم ورجاله ثقات وبسط طرقه وروى الترمذى عن أبى هريرة بمعناه وقال ابن حجر طرقه كثيرة كما في المرقاة

HADITH NO. 3

Kaab bin Ujra relates, "Rasulullah ﷺ said, "Come near to the mimbar". And we came near to the mimbar. When he ascended the first step of the mimbar he said "Aameen". When he ascended the second step of the mimbar he said, "Aameen". When he ascended the third step he said, "Aameen". When he descended we said, "O Rasul of Allah, we have heard from you today something which we never heard before". He said, (When I ascended the first step) Jibra-eel A.S. appeared before me and said, "Woe to him who found the blessed month of Ramadhaan and let it pass by without gaining forgiveness", Upon that I said, "Aameen". When I ascended the second step, he said "Woe to him before whom thy name is mentioned and then does not read durood ('salaat al-an Nabi) on you". I replied "Aameen". When I ascended the third step he said, "Woe unto the person in whose presence both parents or one of them attain old age, and (through failure to serve them) is not allowed to enter Jannah" I said "Aameen".

Reported by Haakim.

COMMENTARY

In his Hadith it appears that Jibra-eel A.S. expressed three curse upon which Rasulullah ﷺ said, "Aameen" every time. In Durre Manthor it is reported that Jibra-eel commanded Rasulullah ﷺ to say "Aameen". Being an angel of such a high stature, Jibra-eel instruction to Rasulullah ﷺ to say "Aameen" upon curses. May Allah in His infinite mercy grant us help and save from these evils.

The first person finds himself in Ramadhaan, the month of blessing and righteousness, and still spends time in sin and disregards his duties and thus does not gain forgiveness. Ramadhaan is the month of Allah's Mercy and if this month is spent in evil and negligence, then how can he expect to be pardoned for his sins? If he cannot gain Allah's pleasure in Ramadhaan, then when will he? What doubt is there about his failure. Moreover, in Ramadhaan numerous opportunities are found for forgiveness.

The second unfortunate person is the one who hears Rasulullah's ﷺ name mentioned and yet does not recite (durood) 'salaat alan Nabi on him. This has been mentioned in many other Ahaadith as well. For this reason some Ulama consider it to be waajib to read 'salaat alan Nabi (durood) whenever the name of Rasulullah ﷺ is mentioned. Besides the curse in this Hadith many other warnings have been reported. In some Ahaadith the person who fails to do so is called an unfortunate and a miser.

At some places such people are even mentioned to be among those who are deserters and who have lost way to Jannah, or among those who will enter Jahannam, and those who are irreligious, and those who will not be allowed to look at the blessed face of Rasulullah ﷺ. The Ulama give us different interpretations of these Ahaadith. The fact is that Rasulullah's ﷺ warning to the one who fails to recite 'salaat alan Nabi (durood) is so severe that it is difficult to endure. And why not? After all, the favours bestowed upon this Ummiah through Rasulullah ﷺ are of such a nature that neither pens nor lectures can do justice in describing them. His favours on us are indeed so great that they truly justify the numerous warnings. On the other hand the reward for 'salaat alan Nabi (durood) is tre-

mendous and to be deprived of this good act is indeed wickedness itself. The Hadith teaches us that, whosoever recites one 'salaat alan Nabi (durood) on Rasulullah ﷺ on them Allah sends ten mercies and for them the Malaa'ikah make dua'. All their sins are forgiven, their rank is elevated, reward is received as much as Mount Uhad, and on their behalf Rasulullah ﷺ shall make shafaa-at on the day of Qiyaamah. Further promises of reward are: Attaining Allah's pleasure and mercy, immunity against His anger, also safety from the terrors of Qiyaamah, and seeing one's promised place in Jannah even while on this earth. Many promises are mentioned for reciting 'salaat alan Nabi (durood) a certain number of times. Besides these there is the promise of not ever being troubled by poverty and need. Promise of achieving nearness to Rasulullah ﷺ in Allah's court, the promise of help against enemies, the promise to cleanse the heart from hypocrisy and spiritual ailments and the promise of gaining the affection of others. Many glad tidings have been mentioned in the Hadith for the reciter of 'salaat alan Nabi (durood) in abundance. The 'Ulama of Fiq have said that it is fardh to recite 'salaat alan Nabi (durood) at least once in a life time, while it is waajib to recite it every time the name of Rasulullah ﷺ is mentioned. Some say it is mustahab.

The third person is the one in whose presence one or both of his parents reach old age and yet is unable to gain Jannah through failure to serve them. This has been explained in many Ahaadith. The 'Ulama have stated that in every permissible act is it compulsory to obey ones parents' commands. One should not be disrespectful to them, but be humble even though one's father and mother be non-believers. Neither should one raise his voice above theirs, nor address parents by their first names. They should be given the preference to do anything before and ahead of you, (viz. eating, walking, sitting, etc.) when they have to be called towards good and prohibited from evil, it should be done with softness. If they refuse to accept, they should still be honoured and respected. And dua' for their guidance should be made. In one Hadith it is related, "The best of doors entering Jannah is the father. If you wish, look after this and if you wish, destroy it". A Sahaabi رضي الله عنه inquired from Rasulullah ﷺ "What are the fights that are due to parents?" He replied, "They are your jannah and jahan-

nam". Their happiness is Jannah and their displeasure is Jahannam. Further it is stated in the Hadith that, "When an obedient son looks with love and devotion to his parents, the reward for that gaze shall be the same as for amaqbool (accepted)". In another Hadith it is stated that, "Apart from associating other gods with Allah, Allah forgives all as He pleases. However, He inflicts the punishments for disobedience to parents in this world before death". A Sahaabi رضي الله عنه said, "O Messenger of Allah, I want to go for Jihad". Rasulullah ﷺ asked, "Is your mother alive?" He replied, "Yes", Rasulullah ﷺ then said, "Serve her, Jannah lies beneath her feet for you". It is mentioned in the Hadith, "The pleasure of Allah lies in pleasing one's father, and Allah's displeasure lies in displeasing one's father". In numerous other Ahaadith the importance and virtue of this has been discussed. From the above it should not be deduced that where parents had not been properly treated and respected and are now dead, there is no other way out except Jahannam for the children. In Shari'ah there is a way out. The Hadith teaches us that in such cases one should make duaa' and Istighfaar for them, and by doing so, one will be counted among those who are obedient. Another Hadith states that the best one can do after one's father's death is to treat his friends and companions in a manner, just as the father would have done.

(٤) عَنْ عِبَادَةَ بْنِ الصَّامِتِ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ﷺ قَالَ يَوْمًا وَحَضَرْنَا رَمَضَانَ أَتَاكُمْ رَمَضَانُ شَهْرُ بَرَكَاتٍ يَغْشَاكُمْ اللَّهُ فِيهِ فَيَنْزِلُ الرَّحْمَةُ وَيُحِطُ الْخَطَايَا وَيَسْتَجِيبُ فِيهِ الدُّعَاءُ يَنْظُرُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى إِلَى تَنَافُسِكُمْ فِيهِ وَيُبَاهِي بِكُمْ مَلَائِكَتَهُ فَارَوْا اللَّهَ مِنْ أَلْفُسِكُمْ خَيْرًا فَإِنَّ الشَّقِيَّ مَنْ حَرَمَ فِيهِ رَحْمَةَ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ رَوَاهُ الطَّبْرَانِيُّ وَرَوَاهُ ثِقَاتٌ إِلَّا أَنَّ مُحَمَّدَ بْنَ قَيْسٍ لَا يَحْضُرُنِي فِيهِ جَرَحَ وَلَا تَعْدِيلَ كَذَا فِي التَّرغِيبِ

HADITH NO. 4

'Ubaadah bin 'Saamit رضي الله عنه reported that Rasulullah ﷺ one day said when Ramadhaan had drawn near, "Ramadhaan, the month of blessing has come to you, wherein Allah turns towards you and sends down to you His special mercy, forgives faults, accept prayers, looks at your competitions for the greatest good and boasts to His mal-

aa'ikah about you. So show to Allah your righteousness from yourselves. For verily the most pitiable and unfortunate one is the one who is deprived of Allah's mercy in this month".

Reported by "Tabraani.

COMMENTARY

In this Hadith we read about the spirit of competition among the believers. One trying to do more good deeds than the other. In our own home, I am greatly pleased seeing how the womenfolk vie with each other, the one trying to recite more of the Qur'aan than the others, so that in spite of domestic responsibilities, fifteen to twenty juz of the Qur'aan is read by one daily. I mention this only with a sense of gratitude to Allah, mentioning His favour and not to boast. May Allah accept their and our deeds and increase our good deeds.

(٥) عَنْ أَبِي سَعِيدٍ الْخُدْرِيِّ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ إِنَّ اللَّهَ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى غَفَاءٌ فِي كُلِّ يَوْمٍ وَلَيْلَةٍ يَعْنِي فِي رَمَضَانَ وَإِنَّ لِكُلِّ مُسْلِمٍ فِي كُلِّ يَوْمٍ وَلَيْلَةٍ دَعْوَةٌ مُسْتَجَابَةٌ رَوَاهُ الْبِزَارُ كَذَا فِي التَّرغِيبِ

HADITH NO. 5

Abu Saeed Khudri relates that Rasulullah ﷺ said, "Everyday and night of Ramadhaan Allah sets free a great number of souls from Jahannam. And for every Muslim during everyday and night there is a time when his duaa' is certainly accepted.

Reported by Bazzaar.

COMMENTARY

Apart from this Hadith, there are many others stating that the duaa' is accepted at the time of if'taar. Unfortunately at that time we are so engrossed in eating if'taar that we have no time for duaa', nor do we recall the duaa' of if'taar. The famous duaa' at if'taar is:

اَللّٰهُمَّ لَكَ صُمْتُ وَبِكَ اَمَنْتُ وَعَلَيْكَ تَوَكَّلْتُ وَعَلَى رِزْقِكَ اَفْطَرْتُ

"O Allah for you have I fasted, in You do I believe, and on You do I rely and now I break this fast with food coming from you"

In this Hadith book this duaa' is mentioned concisely:

Abdullah bin Amr bin Al Aas رضي الله عنه used to read the following duaa':

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ بِرَحْمَتِكَ الَّتِي وَسِعَتْ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ أَنْ تَغْفِرَ لِي

"O Allah, I beg you, through your infinite mercy which surrounds all things, to forgive me"

In some books we read that Rasulullah صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم used to say,

يَا وَاسِعَ الْفَضْلِ اغْفِرْ لِي

"O You who are Great in bounties, forgive me".

Various duaa's are mentioned in the ahaadith. Remember that no special duaa' is fixed. This time (at if'taar) is one when duaa' is accepted. Submit before Allah your needs and if you remember, then make duaa' for me too. (The publishers also humbly request your duaa's).

(٦) عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ ثَلَاثَةٌ لَا تُرَدُّ دَعْوَتُهُمُ الصَّائِمُ حَتَّى يُفْطَرَ وَالْإِمَامُ الْعَادِلُ وَدَعْوَةُ الْمَظْلُومِ يَرْفَعُهَا اللَّهُ فَوْقَ الْغَمَامِ وَيُفْتَحُ لَهَا أَبْوَابُ السَّمَاءِ وَيَقُولُ الرَّبُّ وَعِزَّتِي لَا أَكْصِرُكَ وَلَوْ بَعْدَ حِينٍ
رواه أحمد في حديثه والترمذي وحسنه وابن خزيمة وابن حبان في صحيحهما كذا في الترغيب

HADITH NO. 6

Abu Hurairah reports, Rasulullah صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم said, "There are three people whose duaa's are not rejected, the fasting person until he breaks the fast, the just ruler and the duaa's of the oppressed whose duaa' Allah lifts above the clouds and opens unto it the doors of the heavens, and Allah says, I swear by My honour, verily I shall assist you even though it may be after some time".

Reported by Ahmad and Tirmizhi.

COMMENTARY

In Durre Manthoor it is reported from Aa-'ishah (R.A.) that when Ramadhaan arrived, the colour of Rasulullah's ﷺ face used to change. He then used to increase 'salaah, became even more humble in his duaa's and had even more fear for Allah. According to another report he hardly ever lay down in bed until Ramadhaan came to an end. Further, in a Hadith it is stated that the Malaa'ikah bearing the throne are commanded in Ramadhaan to leave everything else and recite 'Aameen' to the duaa' of those who fast. There are many Ahaadith stating that the duaa's during Ramadhaan in particular are accepted. When Allah has promised and His truthful Nabi ﷺ has informed us, there should be no doubt whatsoever about the truth of these reports. Yet it is strange that in spite of this, we still find such people who apparently do not get what they make duaa' for. They ask and do not receive. This does not mean that their duaa's have been rejected. One should at this point understand the meaning of duaa' being answered.

Rasulullah ﷺ informed us that when a muslim makes duaa' for anything from Allah, except for the severance of ties with relatives or for a sinful thing then he definitely receives one out of the following three things: Firstly he gets the exact thing for which he made duaa'. Secondly, if that is not received, Allah either removes from him some great calamity in exchange for that which he desired, or thirdly the reward for the thing for which he made duaa' is kept deposited for him in the Hereafter. Another Hadith states that on the day of Qiyaamah Allah will call His servant, and say to him, "O My servant, I used to command you to ask of me I had promised to answer. Did you beg of Me?" The servant will answer, "Yes I did". Then Allah shall reply, "You did not put forth any request which had not been accepted. You made duaa' that a certain calamity should be removed, which I did for you in the worldly life. You made duaa' that a certain sorrow should be case off you and the effect of that sorrow was even known to you. For that I have fixed for you such and such a reward". Rasulullah ﷺ says, that person shall again be reminded of each and every duaa', and he shall be shown how it had been fulfilled in the world or what reward had been stored for him in the hereafter. When seeing that, he shall wish

that not a single duaa' of his should have been answered on earth, so that he could receive the full rewards only in the Hereafter.

Duaa' is indeed very important and to neglect it at any time causes us great loss. Even when the outward signs seem to indicate that our duaa' is not answered, courage should not be lost. At the end of this book, in the lengthy Hadith which we will be discussing, it is also apparent that Allah in answering duaa's, considers first of all our own good and welfare. Should Allah find that granting what we beseech of Him is beneficial, then He grants it, otherwise not. Actually it is Allah's favour that we do not always get what we ask for, since very often, because of our lack of understanding, we beg for things which are not beneficial at a particular time.

Once again I must draw your attention to the fact that men as well as women suffer from a disease of cursing their children in their anger and sorrows. Be very careful. In the sight of Allah there are certain times when whatever duaa' is made it is immediately answered. So here due to our stupidity, the child is cursed and when the effect of that same duaa' comes over the child and lands him into calamity, the parents go crying and wailing from side to side not even realising that this is the result of their own curse. Rasulullah ﷺ commands us not to curse ourselves, our children, possessions, or servants.

It is just possible that this is the curse that is heard and answered at a time when all requests are granted, especially in Ramadhaan, which is filled with such special mustajjad (accepted) moments. Hence in this month great care should be taken. Sayyidana Omar رضي الله عنه reports from Rasulullah ﷺ "The one who remembers Allah during Ramadhaan is forgiven and the one who makes duaa' to Allah is not forsaken".

Ibn Mas'ood رضي الله عنه reports that on every night of Ramadhaan a caller from the heavens calls out, "O you seeker of good come, come near, O you seeker of evil, turn away (from evil) and open your eyes". Thereafter that angel calls out, "Is there any seeker of forgiveness that he may be forgiven? Is there any one repenting so that his repentance shall be accepted? Is there anyone making duaa' that his duaa' may be granted? Is there anyone begging anything so that his plea may be fulfilled?"

Lastly it should be borne in mind that there are certain conditions on which duaa's are accepted. Among these is halaal food. Where haraam is consumed duaa' is not accepted. Rasulullah ﷺ said, "Many a greatly troubled one in distress lifts up his hands to the heavens making duaa', crying, 'O Allah, O Allah'. However the food he eats is haraam, what he drinks is haraam, his clothes are of haraam and in such cases how can his duaa' be accepted?"

A story is related about a group of people in Kufa whose duaa' used to be always answered. Whenever a ruler was over them, they used to make duaa' for a curse upon him which quickly came to destroy him. When Hajjaaj became ruler there, he invited these people, among others, to a feast. After having eaten, he said, "Now I am not afraid of the duaa' for curse upon me from these people because haraam food has entered their stomachs". At this stage let us ponder over how much haraam is being consumed in these times when people are even trying to make permissible the earnings of interest money. We find our people go so far as to think that bribery and what is obtained from it is permissible, while our traders very often, when dealing with people, deceive them.

(٧) عَنْ ابْنِ عُمَرَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى الْمُتَسَحِّرِينَ رواه الطبرانی في الأوسط وابن حبان في صحيحه كذا في الترغيب

HADITH NO 7

Ibn Umar رضي الله عنه relates Rasulullah ﷺ said, "Verily Allah and His Malaa'ikah send mercy upon those who eat sah'ri (sower – suhoor)".

Reported by 'Tabraani.

COMMENTARY

How is Allah's favour upon us that even the partaking of sah'ri is a virtuous act which is enormously rewarded. There are so many Ahaadith in which the virtues of sah'ri are expounded and rewards mentioned. Allaama Ainy – commentator on Bukhaari gathered Ahaadith from seventeen Sahaabah on the excellence of sah'ri. All 'Ulama are agreed it is mustahab. Many are deprived of this great

reward because of laziness. Some even finish Taraweeh and then eat, (which they regard as sah'ri) and get into bed. What great blessings do they loose! Sah'ri actually means partaking of food shortly before Fajr (ref: Qamoos). Some authorities say that the time for sah'ri commences after half of the night has passed (Mirquaat). The author of Kash-shaaf (Zamakhshari) divided the night into six portions stating that the last one of them is the time for sah'ri. When the night (from sunset till dawn) lasts for twelve hours then the last two hours would be the correct time for sah'ri. It must also be remembered that to eat at the latest time is better and greater in reward than eating earlier, on condition that no doubt remains as to sah'ri had been eaten before or after the time of Fajr. The Ahaadith are full of the virtues of sah'ri. Rasulullah ﷺ said, "The difference in our fasting with that of Ahulul-Kitaab (Jews and Christians) lies in partaking of food at sah'ri time, they do not".

It is mentioned in the Hadith, "Eat sah'ri because in it lies great blessings". It also mentioned, "In three things there are great blessings, in Jamaah (company), in eating thareed and in sah'ri". In this Hadith the use of the word jamaah is general, whereupon we deduce it to refer to 'salaah with jamaah and all those righteous deeds done together and Allah's help comes to them. (Thareed is a delicious type of food, in which dry baked bread is mixed with gravy containing meat). The third thing mentioned in the Hadith is sah'ri when Rasulullah ﷺ used to invite any of the companions to eat sah'ri with him, he used to say, "Come and partake of blessed food with me". One Hadith says, "Eat sah'ri and strengthen yourself for fasting. And sleep in the afternoon (siesta) so as to gain assistance in waking up in the latter portion of the night (for 'ibadah)". Abdullah bin Haarith reported that one of the Sahaabah said, "I once visited Rasulullah ﷺ at such a time while he was busy partaking of sah'ri. Rasulullah ﷺ then said, "This is a thing full of blessings which Allah has granted you. Never leave it".

Rasulullah ﷺ has encouraged sah'ri in numerous Ahaadith, "Even though there be no food, then too one date should be eaten or a drink of water taken". Thus, when there definitely lies great blessings and reward in sah'ri, muslims should endeavour to gain as such as poss-

ible. However, in all things moderation is important, while going beyond the bonds of moderation is harmful. Neither should so little be eaten that one feels weak throughout the period of fasting, nor should so much be eaten that discomfort is felt in the digestive organs. Many a time we have been prohibited in the Hadith from filling the stomach excessively.

In his commentary on Saheeh Bukhaari, Ibn Hajar has mentioned various reasons for the blessedness of sah'ri.

- (a) Because in it the sunnah is followed.
- (b) Through sah'ri we oppose the ways of the Ahlul-Kitaab; which we are at all times called upon to do. They do not have sah'ri when fasting.
- (c) It provides strength for ibaadah.
- (d) It promotes more sincerity in ibaadah.
- (e) It aids in eliminating bad temper which normally comes about as a result of hunger.
- (f) It provides an opportunity to assist the needy at that early hour, especially a poor neighbour.
- (g) Sah'ri is at a time when duaa's are accepted.
- (h) At the time of sah'ri one gets the opportunity to remember Allah's, Thikr and lift up the hands to Him in duaa'.

These are a few of major reasons. There are others as well.

Ibn Daqeequl 'Iyd says that some 'Sufis are doubtful whether the eating of sah'ri is against the object of fasting or not. They maintain that the object of fasting is to stay away from food, drink and sexual desires, therefore sah'ri is against the object of fasting. In many opinion the amount to be eaten should be less at both sah'ri and if'taar, however this varies according to different persons and their activities. For example, for those students who are busy seeking knowledge of Deen, little food at sah'ri as well as if'taar, will be harmful. For them it is better not to have very little, because they seek Deeni knowledge which is very important (for the preservation and spread of Islaam). Similar is the case of those who are busy with thikr and other Deeni activities. Once Rasulullah ﷺ announced

to those proceeding to jihaad, "There is no virtue in fasting while travelling". That was in the month of Ramadhaan when some Sahaabah were busy with fardh fasting. This was because of jihaad. However if eating less does not cause laziness and weakness in doing important Deeni work, then there is no harm in eating less. Allaama Sharaani R.A. mentions in Sharh Iqna, "A covenant was made with us that we shall not fill our stomachs completely when eating especially in the nights of Ramadhaan". It is better that one should eat less in the nights of Ramadhaan than on other nights. After all, what type of fast is it after having filled oneself at saḥ'ri and i'ftaar? The Mashaa'ikh of 'Tariqah have said, "Whoever remains hungry in Ramadhaan, shall remain safe from the evil of shay'taan through the year until the next Ramadhaan". Numerous other Mashaa'ikh have also emphasized this point.

In the commentary of Ihya', Awaarif quotes that, Sahl bin Adullah Tastari used to eat only once in every fifteen days, while in Ramadhaan he ate only-one morsel. In order to follow the sunnah he used to have a drink of water for saḥ'ri and i'ftaar. Shaikh Junaid R.A. was a man who always used to fast throughout the year. However, when noble friends used to visit him occasionally, he used to break his fast and eat with them saying, "The virtue of breaking fast and eating with (such noble) friends is not less than fasting (nafl).

Similarly we can mention the experiences of numerous saints, who through little food used to train their inner selves, but once again bear in mind, that it should not be carried out to such an extent that the religious activities and responsibilities are neglected as a result of weakness in the body.

(٨) عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ رُبَّ صَائِمٍ لَيْسَ لَهُ مِنْ صِيَامِهِ إِلَّا الْجُوعُ وَرُبَّ قَائِمٍ لَيْسَ لَهُ مِنْ قِيَامِهِ إِلَّا السُّهَرُ
رواه ابن ماجه واللفظ له والنسائي وابن خزيمة في صحيحه والحاكم وقال على شرط البخارى ذكر لفظهما المندرى في الترغيب بمعناه

HADITH NO. 8

Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه relates that Rasulullah ﷺ said, "Many are the ones who fast, attaining nothing by such

fasting except for hunger, and many are the ones performing 'salaah by night attaining nothing by it, except for the discomfort of staying awake at night".

Reported by Ibn Majah and Nasa-iy.

COMMENTARY

With regard to this Hadith, the 'Ulama have mentioned three different interpretations. Firstly this Hadith may refer to those who fast during the day and then eat if'taar with such food which is haraam. All the reward received for fasting is destroyed because of the great sin of eating haraam, and nothing has been attained except hunger. Secondly, our Nabi ﷺ may have meant those who fasted properly but during fasting, kept themselves busy with backbiting and slandering others (see later). Thirdly, the person referred to may be the one who, while fasting, did not stay away from evil and sin. Since Rasulullah ﷺ sayings are concise, all forms of sin are included here. Likewise is the case of 'salaah all night but because of backbiting or other sinful act (e.g. allowing Fajr 'salaah to pass by) his noble act goes unrewarded.

(٩) عَنْ أَبِي غَيْثَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ قَالَ سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ﷺ يَقُولُ
الصَّيَّامُ جُنَّةٌ مَا لَمْ يَخْرُقْهَا رَوَاهُ النَّسَائِيُّ وَابْنُ مَاجَهَ وَابْنُ خُزَيْمَةَ وَالحَاكِمُ وَصَحَّحَهُ عَلَى شَرْطِ الْبُخَارِيِّ
وَالْفَاظُ هُمْ مُخْتَلَفٌ حَكَاهُمَا الْمُنْذَرِيُّ فِي التَّرْغِيبِ

HADITH NO. 9

Abu 'Ubaidah رضي الله عنه reports, "I have heard Rasulullah ﷺ saying, "Fasting is a protective covering for a man, as long as he does not tear that protection".

Reported by Nasa-iy, ibn Majah and ibn Khuzaymah

COMMENTARY

"Protective covering" here means such a covering whereby a man protects himself from his infamous enemy, shay'taan. This is what fasting does. In another Hadith we are told that fasting "saves one from Allah's punishment in the Hereafter". One Hadith mentions "that fasting saves one from Jahannam (hell)". Once somebody inquired from

Rasulullah ﷺ "What causes the fast to break?" He replied: "Telling lies and backbiting".

This Hadith when read in conjunction with so many others, actually tells us to avoid such deeds. Such deeds cause fasting to be wasted. We are fond of indulging in unnecessary conversation to pass the time of fast. Some 'Ulama are of the opinion that the telling lies, backbiting, slander etc., actually does cause the fast to break just as eating and drinking does. However the vast majority of 'Ulama believe that the fast does not actually break but becomes void of blessings.

The Mashaa'ikh have mentioned six things about which care should be taken in fasting.

Firstly, one should keep the eyes away from any place where one is not supposed to look. They even go so far as to prohibit looking at one's own wife with desire. So how much more important is it to avoid looking at another woman with desire. Similarly one should avoid looking at any evil place or where evil is committed. Rasulullah ﷺ said, "The evil eyes is an arrow of the shay'taan. Whosoever out of fear for Allah, prevents himself from looking at evil, Allah shall grant him such faith, the sweetness and ecstasy of which he will feel in the heart". The 'Sufis interpret the above saying about scenes which one should avoid looking at including such places and things which distract the mind from the remembrance of Allah.

Secondly, guarding the tongue against telling lies, unnecessary conversation, backbiting, arguments, swearing etc. In Bukhaari we read that fasting is a deterrent for the fasting person. For this reason those who fast should avoid all nonsensical talk, joking, arguments etc. Should anyone pick an argument, then say, "I am fasting". In other words, one should not start an argument and when someone else starts it then too one should avoid it. When the one who begins an argument is a reasonable person, then say to him "I am fasting". When the one who starts an argument is a foolish person then one should remind one's self that, "I am fasting and must not respond to such meaningless things". One must particularly abstain from backbiting and lies. During the time of our Nabi ﷺ two women were fasting and suffered such extreme hunger that the fast became unbearable and both were on the point of death. The Sahaabah brought this to the notice of our Nabi

ﷺ who sent a bowl commanding them to vomit in it. When they both vomitted in the bowl, pieces of meat and fresh blood were found in it. The Sahaabah were greatly surprised, upon which our Nabi ﷺ said, "They fasted and avoided eating halaal food from Allah, but partook of haraam food by backbiting other people".

Something else that becomes clear from the foregoing, that by backbiting, fasting becomes so much more difficult. For this reason both women almost died. Similar is the case with sinful acts. Experience shows that on the faithful God fearing ones, fasting has no adverse effect, whereas the wilful transgressors mostly find it difficult. If you wish the fast to be easy abstain from sins, especially backbiting. Allah says in the Qur'aan that backbiting is the (actual) eating of the flesh of one's brother. We find this description in the Hadith too. Once Rasulullah ﷺ on seeing a group of people said, "Pick your teeth". They replied; "We did not partake of meat today", Rasulullah ﷺ said, "A certain person's meat is sticking to your teeth". This meant that they were involved in backbiting. May Allah keep us safe from this evil because we are very neglectful of this. All are guilty of this. Backbiting is rife even in the assemblies of the religiously educated and those who are considered religious. What is most grieving is that we do not even consider it to be backbiting. If one suspects that one is guilty of backbiting then it is hidden by terming it a "relation of facts".

One of the Sahaabah inquired from Rasulullah ﷺ "What is backbiting?" Rasulullah ﷺ replied, "To mention something about your brother behind his back which he resents". The Sahaabah then said, "And is it still backbiting if that thing mentioned about him really is in him?" Our Nabi ﷺ said, "In that case (if that which was mentioned is really true) it is definitely backbiting. And if he is guilty of it then you have slandered him". Once Nabi ﷺ passed two graves. He said, "On both these inmates of the graves the punishment of the grave has descended. One is being punished because of backbiting, the other because of not having taken precautions when passing urine". Rasulullah ﷺ also said, "There are more than seventy kinds of evil in (using) interest. The mildest form of it is like having committed incest with your mother. And taking one Dirham of interest is a worse evil than having fornicated

thirty-five times. The worst and most evil form of taking interest is the humiliation of a Muslim. In the Hadith we are sternly warned against backbiting and disgracing others. I very much wanted to write down here a number of Ahaadith on this subject because all our gatherings and conversations are generally filled with them (backbiting and slander). However I finally decide not to do so because the subject under discussion here is something else—not actually backbiting. So having just noted down these few, I once again make duaa' that Allah keep us safe from this evil. And I beg of my friends and brothers to pray for me too. We are all full of inner faults.

*"Arrogance and pride, ignorance and negligence,
dislike and malice, evil thoughts,
lies and breaking of promises,
ostentation and hatred,
backbiting and animosity.*

*What sickness is there O Allah, that is not in me,
Heal me from every illness and grant me my necessity,
Verily I have a heart that is ailing,
Verily you are Healer of the sick".*

Thirdly, according to the 'Sufis, what should be avoided is that the ears should be kept away from listening to anything makrooh. It is haraam to say or listen to anything which should not be said. Rasulullah ﷺ said that in "backbiting both the backbiter and the listener are equal in sin".

Fourthly, the rest of the body should be kept away from sin and evil. Neither should the hands touch it, nor the feet made to walk towards it. Special care should be taken, especially at the time of if'taar. No such thing should enter it, about which there is any doubt as to its being haraam or halaal. When a person fasts, and at if'taar time breaks fast with haraam food, he becomes just like a sick person who takes medicine to cure himself of the sickness but also adds poison which destroys him.

Fifthly, after having fasted it is not advisable to fill the stomach completely even with halaal food at if'taar, because then, the object of fasting is defeated. Whereas fasting helps to diminish one's carnal desires, it also strengthens the angelic qualities of man and increases the illumination of the soul. For eleven months we have been eating and drinking. What harm is there if one eats less for

only one month. We have a bad habit of filling our bellies at if'taar for what was not eaten during the day and also at sah'ri in preparation for the day, thus increasing our average consumption. Many such things are eaten which we normally do not eat at other times. In fact, during Ramadhaan we develop this type of bad habit.

Imaam Ghazaali R.A. asks the same question, "when the object of fasting is to conquer the dictates of Ibless and our carnal passions; then how can this possibly be done by eating excessively at if'taar and thus defeating the objects? Actually in that case we have only altered the time of eating and have not decreased our food intake. Moreover by having so many various types of delicacies which we do not have out of Ramadhaan and many people also have the habit of keeping special food items for Ramadhaan. Therefore after fasting the full day we consume even more than we do in normal times. The result is that instead of lessening the carnal desires, these are considerably increased. The real benefit of fasting comes as a result of actual hunger in the true spirit. Fasting has various worldly objectives and benefits as the observance of Shar'i injunction, which is the ultimate aim. Our Nabi ﷺ said, "Shay'taan flows through the body of man like blood; so close up that path by remaining hungry". All the limbs are spiritually nourished when the body is starved and when the body is stuffed then all the limbs are spiritually starved.

Another object is that fasting gives us the chance of appreciating the plight of the poor and destitute and thus engender sympathetic feelings toward them. This could only be attained by remaining hungry and by filling the stomach with so much delicious food at sah'ri that one does not feel hungry until if'taar. Once a person went to Bishr Haafi. He found the saint shivering from cold in spite of having warm clothes at his side. That person inquired, "Is this a time for taking off clothes?" Bishr replied; "There are numerous poor and needy ones, I am unable to sympathise with them. The most I could do is to be like them". The 'sufis plead for the same attitude in fasting and so do the Fuqaha's (Jurists). In Maraqu'il Falaah it is written, "Do not eat excessively at sah'ri as the prosperous ones do, for this is the way to lose the object of fasting". Allaama 'Ta-h'taawi writes, "enduring the pangs of hunger is a cause for increased reward". Similarly a feeling of sympathy is

developed for the poor and hungry ones". Our Nabi ﷺ himself said; "Allah does not dislike the filling of anything to the brim more than He dislikes the filling of the stomach". In another Hadith Rasulullah ﷺ says, "A few morsels are sufficient to keep one fit". If anyone is bent on eating he should not overeat. The best amount for a person is that one third should be filled with food, one third with drink while the other third remains empty. After all there must have been some reason for which Rasulullah ﷺ fasted continuously for many day on end, without eating anything in between. I had seen my ustaath Moulana Khalil Ahmed (R.A.) eating only slightly more than one thin (hand made) bread (roti) at if'taar and at sah'ri during the whole month of Ramadhaan. When any of his near ones used to urge him to eat more, he used to reply, "I am not hungry. Actually, I merely sat down to eat to be with my friends".

About Moulana Shaah Abdurraheem Raaipoori R.A., I have heard that in Ramadhaan, he used to fast for days on end, having only a few cups of tea without milk for sah'ri and if'taar apart from that nothing else. Once his most trusted follower (and Khalefah Moulana Shaah Abdulqadir remarked with anxiety, "Hadhrat you will become quite weak, if you do not eat anything". To this Moulana Shaah Raaipoori replied; "Praise be to Allah, I am experiencing something of the ecstasy of Jannah". (may Allah grant us all the ability to follow such pious ones. Aameen).

The sixth point is that after fasting one should always have fear and anxiety as to whether one's fast had been accepted or rejected by Allah. This should be the case with all ibaadah. One never knows whether some such important thing may have left out about which no notice was taken. One should fear that Allah may reject one's deeds. Rasulullah ﷺ said; "Many are the reciters of the Qur'aan who are being cursed by the Qur'aan". He also said, "On the day of Qiyaamah, one of those with whom Allah shall reckon first shall be a shaheed (martyr in the way of the Allah). Allah shall call him and reminding him of all Allah's favours bestowed upon him, which the shaheed shall admit. He shall then be asked; "What have you done by way of expressing gratitude for those favours?" The shaheed shall reply; "If fought in your way till I became a shaheed". Allah shall reply, "Not true. You fought so that you could be called a brave man. And so it

was said". Thereafter it shall be commanded that he be pulled with his face on the ground and cast into Jahannam. Thereafter an aalim shall be called. He too shall reminded of Allah's favours and asked the same question. He shall reply, "O Allah, I strove to acquire knowledge, taught others and for Your sake I recited Qur'aan". Allah shall say, "Not true. You did all that merely to be said that you are learned and so it was said". Then it shall be commanded that he too be pulled face on the ground and cast into Jahannam. Thereafter a rich man shall be called. He too shall be reminded of Allah's favours. He too shall admit, and in reply to Allah's question as to what he did to express his gratitude, he shall reply, "I did not find any worthy cause wherein I did not spend out charitably for Your sake". Allah's reply shall come, "Not true. You did all that so that is may be said that you are very generous. And so it was said". Then it shall be commanded that he too be pulled face on the ground and cast into Jahannam. May Allah save us.

This is the result of ill-formed niyyahs. Numerous such instances are mentioned in the Hadith. The fasting person must at all times safeguard his niyyah and at the same time fear for its adulteration. He should also constantly make duaa' that Allah Ta'aala makes this a cause for His pleasure. It should also be borne in mind that regarding your act as not being worthy of acceptance is one aspect and your hopes for the infinite grace and mercy of Allah Ta'aala is another aspect. This latter aspect of Allah's graciousness is unique. At times He converts even misdeeds to be rewardful (due to other good deeds that follow the misdeed) then why be dispondent of reward for defective deeds? These six things are compulsory for all the righteous ones.

As for the exceptionally pious ones a seventh point is added. That is, during fasting, the heart should not be turned towards anyone else except Allah, so much that during the course of the fast it is a defect to worry whether there shall be something to eat for if'taar. Some Shaykhs even consider it a fault to think about food for if'taar or that one should endeavour to acquire something, because this shows lack of confidence in Allah's promise of sustenance. In the commentary of Ihya 'ulumid Deeni the author mentions, regarding some Mashaa'ikhs, that should anything arrive for if'taar before the time of if'taar, then it was given

The Qur'aan commands, "Fasting has been prescribed for you". The commentators of the Qur'aan say that from this verse it is deduced that fasting is made compulsory for every portion of the body. Thus, fasting of the tongue means abstaining from telling lies, etc. Fasting of the ears means not listening to evil. Fasting of the eyes means not to look at any form of evil and sin. Similarly fasting of the self means to be free from greed and all carnal desires. Fasting of the heart means casting away from it the love for worldly things. Fasting of the 'rooh' (spirit) means to abstain (in this world) from the pleasures of the Akhirah. Fasting of the mind means avoiding thoughts about the presence of any other being besides Allah.

(١٠) عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ﷺ قَالَ مَنْ أَفْطَرَ يَوْمًا مِنْ رَمَضَانَ مِنْ غَيْرِ رُحْصَةٍ وَلَا مَوْضِعٍ لَمْ يَقْضِهِ صَوْمُ الدَّهْرِ كُلِّهِ وَإِنْ صَامَهُ

رواه أحمد والترمذي وأبو داود وابن ماجه والدارمي والبخاري في ترجمة باب كذا في المشكوة قلت وبسط الكلام على طرقه العيني في شرح البخاري

Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه reports that Rasulullah صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Whosoever eats on one day of Ramadhaan without a valid reason or excuse or genuine illness (acceptable in Shari-ah), shall never be able to compensate for that day even by fasting the rest of his life".

COMMENTARY

The view of some 'ulama is that if anybody has without any valid excuse failed to fast any day of Ramadhaan and dishonoured it by eating etc, such a person can never compensate (duly fulfil the Qadhaa) for this violation. Even by fasting for the rest of one's life that person cannot compen-

sate for this one day. Ali رضي الله عنه and others held the same view. However the vast majority of 'ulama maintain that where one did not fast one day of Ramadhaan, then only one fast will suffice as compensation. On the other hand, when a person has started to fast in Ramadhaan and then breaks it during the day without any valid excuse, then according to the Shari-ah, this person shall have to fast continuously for two months without a break in between. No matter what happens, the true virtue and blessings of Ramadhaan will never be attained. This is the meaning of the above Hadith ie. that where a day of Ramadhaan has been lost without excuse, any number of fasts by way of compensation will not bring back the true blessings of even one day of Ramadhaan.

This all is for those who keep the qadhaa fast. How unfortunate and misguided are those who deny the fast and do not observe it at all? Fasting is one of the fundamental pillars of Islam. Rasu^lullah صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم has mentioned five principles of Islam. First and foremost is the oneness of Allah and Muhammad صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم being a Rasul (Messenger of Allah) and thereafter the four famous pillars: Namaaz, Fast, Zakaat and Haj.

How many Muslims do we find who are counted amongst the Muslims, yet do not uphold even one of these five. In official papers and census they will be recorded as Muslims, whereas in Allah's sight they cannot be counted as such. Ibn Abbas (R.A.) relates in a Hadith stating, "Islam is based on three principles:—a. The Shahaadah, b. 'Salaah, c. Fasting. Whoever fails to uphold any of these is a disbeliever and it is permissible to give him capital punishment". As regard to the latter portion of this Hadith, the 'ulama have said that they only become disbelievers when together with failing to uphold any principle, they also deny its necessity, or its being a principle. No matter what interpretation is given, the fact remain that Rasu^lullah صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم spoke against such people with utmost vehemence. Hence, those who fail to keep up the faraa'idh of the Deen should indeed fear Allah's wrath. No one can escape death, and the pleasure and comforts of this life are short lived.

Only obedience to His commands can save us. There are those ignorant ones who do not fast at all. So much worse is the position of those who do not only refuse to

fast, but speak such words whereby they scoff and jeer at the month of fasting in sarcastic manner. This is something dangerous, bringing one to the brink of kufr. You may have heard them say, "Fasting is for those who have no food in their homes not for me". Or "What does Allah gain by having us suffer hunger?" Such words should never be uttered. It should be remembered that to scoff and jeer at, or poke fun at even the smallest part of our Deen becomes the cause of kufr (apostasy). Should any person not perform a single 'salaah in his life, not fast one single day, or fail to perform any fardh obligations in Islam, then that person does not become a kaafir, as long as one does not deny their being necessary. However one will certainly be punished for any fardh that has been neglected. But to scoff and jeer at any tiniest aspect of the Deen is kufr (apostasy), and can result in all good actions being invalidated. From this it can be seen how delicate this affair is. Such irresponsible utterances should never be made about fasting

CHAPTER TWO

LAYLATUL QADR

Amongst the nights of Ramadhaan there is one called "Laylatul Qadr" a night that is noted for its great blessings. The Qur'aan Kareem describes it as being greater in blessedness and spiritual virtue than a thousand months which in turn means that it is greater than eighty three years and four months.

Fortunate indeed is that person who attains the full blessings of this night by spending it in 'ibaadah of Allah, because he has then attained reward for 'ibaadah of eighty three years and four months and even more. Indeed the granting of this night to the faithful muslim is a great favour.

THE ORIGIN

Regarding this night, in a Hadith reported by Anas رضي الله عنه in Durre Manthoor Rasulullah ﷺ is reported to have said; "Laylatul Qadr was granted to my ummah and not to any other ummah before this". Regarding the reason for the granting of Laylatul Qadr, various reasons are mentioned. One reason, according to some Ahaadith is given thus: Rasulullah ﷺ used to look at the longer lives of the earlier people and was saddened when pondering over the much shorter lives of his own ummah. If his ummah had wished to compete with the people before them in the doing of righteous deeds, because of their shorter lives it would be impossible for them to either emulate or surpass them. To compensate for this difference in their life span, Allah in His infinite mercy granted them with this night of great blessing. This means that if any fortunate one of this ummah spends during his life time ten such nights in the worship of his maker, he would have gained the reward for 'ibaadah of eight hundred and thirty years and even more. Another report states that; Rasulullah ﷺ once related to the sahaabah the story of a very righteous man from among the Bani Israa'iyi who used to spend one thousand months in jihaad. On hearing this, the sahaabah envied that person because they could not attain the same reward,

whereupon Allah granted them the Night of Power as a recompense.

Still another report states that our Nabi ﷺ once mentioned the names of the four most pious people from among the Bani Israa'iyl who each spent eighty years in Allah's sincere service, worshipping Him, and not sinning in the least. They were Nabi Ayyoob alayhis salaam, Zaka-riyya alayhis salaam, Hizqeel alayhis salaam and Yu'shaa alayhis salaam. The sahaabahs heard this with astonishment. Then Jibraeel alayhis salaam appeared and recited Surah Qadr, wherein the blessing of this night was revealed.

Apart from these reports, there are others too, explaining the origin of the Night of Power. This type of difference in narration arises because, after occurrence of several incidents only one aayah is revealed. That aayah then is relevant to anyone of the incidents that took place. But no matter which of them we accept, the important fact that remains is that Allah has granted the ummah of Muhammad this night. This is a great favour and gift of Allah. To devote yourself on this night is also a blessing from Allah. How worthy of envy are those Mashaa'ikh who say they did not miss the 'ibaadah of one Laylatul Qadr since they became of age. Now, as to which night it is, here again approximately fifty different views of the 'ulama are mentioned. It is not easy for me to enumerate them all. But the most accepted versions, as well as further discussions on this night shall follow in the ensuing pages of this book. The numerous excellences of this night are mentioned in various books of Hadith. These will also be mentioned. For the reason that the Qur'aan Majeed itself mentions the night, we shall commence with a short commentary on Surah Qadr. (The translations are from A. Yusuf Ali).

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ فِي لَيْلَةِ الْقَدْرِ

"In the name of Allah the beneficent, the Merciful".
 "We have indeed revealed this (message) in the Night of Power".
 (Suratul Qadr: 1).

Reference here is made to the fact that on this special night, the Qur'aan was sent down from Al Lowhul Mahfuz (The preserved Tablet) to the heavens (above the

earth). Because a great book like Qur'aan was revealed in this night is in itself sufficient to explain its excellence, needless to mention all other blessings and virtues which are included. In the very next verse by way of drawing and increasing our interest in the matter under discussion, a question is asked:

وَمَا أَذْرَاكَ مَا لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ

"And what will explain to you what the Night of Power is". (Suratul Qadr: 2).

In other words, the question asked here is: Have you any knowledge as to the greatness and the great importance of this night? Have you any knowledge as to the great favours and bounties that are placed in it? The next verse proceeds to enumerate some of that greatness:

لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ أَلْفِ شَهْرٍ

"The Night of Power is better than a thousand months". (Suratul Qadr: 3).

The true meaning here is that reward for spending this night in 'ibaadah is better and more than having spent one thousand months 'ibadah, it is in fact more but as to how much more rewarding it is, we are not told here.

تَنَزَّلُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ وَالرُّوحُ فِيهَا بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِمْ مِّنْ كُلِّ أَمْرٍ

"Therein come down the Angels and the Spirit by Allah's permission on every errand". (Suratul Qadr: 4)

A fine explanation is given in this verse by Imaam Raazi R.A. Commenting on this verse he explains that when man first appeared on earth, created by Allah as His vicegerent on earth, the Mala'ikah looked on him with scorn. When Allah informed them of His intention of placing man on earth, they even ventured to ask: "Will you place in this earth one who shall commit evil therein and shed blood?"

Similarly, when his parents noted his original form as

a mere drop of mani (sperm), they too looked upon it with scorn and resentment, so much so, that they considered it as something which polluted clothing and had to be washed away. But later when Allah made that same despicable sperm into a fine form of man, they began to love and cherish him. So far have things now progressed that when on this Night of Power we see that same man worshipping Allah and adoring Him, those very same Malaa'ikah who had previously looked down on him with scorn, descend towards him, obviously repentant for the thoughts they had once harboured against him.

In this verse mention is made . . . "and the spirit". Reference is clearly to Jibraeelalayhis salaam. Commentators of the Qur'aan have given various versions of this word. Let us look at some of them:

- (a) The vast majority of the commentators are agreed that Jibraeel alayhis salaam is meant here, and according to Imaam Raazi, (R.A.) this is the most correct meaning. Allah first makes mention of the Malaa'ikah and then because of Jibraeel's alayhis salaam status among them, special mention is made of him.
- (b) Some commentators hold the view that "Spirits" here means one angel of such extra ordinary gigantic proportion that before him heavens and earth appear as almost nothing (as a morsel).
- (c) Another group of commentators opine that "Spirit" here means one such group of Malaa'ikah who never appear and only on this night are they seen by other Malaa'ikah.
- (d) Some commentators again believe that the "Spirit" here designates one such creation of Allah, which although it partakes of food and drink, still is neither man nor angel.
- (e) There is also a view that "Spirit" here refers to 'Iysaa alayhis salaam who on this night comes down with the Malaa'ikah to view the righteous deeds of this ummah.
- (f) The last view we wish to mention here is that "Spirit" means Allah's special mercy which comes in the wake of the angels descent. But

already stated the first opinion is the most acceptable.

In this respect Imaam Bayhaqi R.A. reports a Hadith by Anas wherein Rasulullah ﷺ is reported to have said. "On Laylatul Qadr Jibraeel alayhis salaam comes down with a group of angels and make duaa for mercy for every one whom they find busy in 'ibadah". This same verse under discussion says.

يَاذِنُ رَبَّهُمْ مِنْ كُلِّ أَمْرٍ

"... By Allah's permission on every errand ...".

The Author of Mazhaahire Haq writes that on this night ages ago the Malaa'ikah were created; on this night long ago the creation on Aadam alayhis salaam was begun as the matter from which he was created had been gathered; on this night trees were planted in Jannah and large number of Ahaadith bear witness to the fact that on this night duaa's are granted. Similary we read in the kitaab, Durre Manthoor, that according to a Hadith it was on this night that 'Iysaa alayhis salaam was lifted up bodily into the heavens and also it was on this night that the towbah (repentance) of Bani Israa-'iyl was accepted.

سَلَامٌ حَتَّى مَطْلَعِ الْفَجْرِ

"Peace be until the break of dawn".

(Suratul Qadr: 5).

Yes, this is the very embodiment of peace. Throughout its hours the Malaa'ikah recite salaam upon faithful believers adoring their Lord. As one group descends another ascends as is explained in the Ahaadith. Another interpretation is that it is a night of complete safety from evil and mischief.

These blessings remain throughout the night until the break of dawn and are not confined to any specific hour. And now having noted a few virtues of this night as explained in the words of Allah, there is no further need to quote any Ahaadith. However, since many virtues have been in numerous Ahaadith we mention a few here.

(١) عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ مَنْ قَامَ لَيْلَةَ الْقَدْرِ إِيمَانًا وَاحْتِسَابًا غُفِرَ لَهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِهِ كَذَا فِي التَّرْغِيبِ عَنِ الْبُخَارِيِّ وَمُسْلِمٍ

HADITH NO. 1

Abu Hurayrah رضي الله عنه reports Rasulullah صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم said, "Whoever stands in prayer and 'ibaadah on the night of Power with sincere faith and with sincere hope of gaining reward, his previous sins are forgiven".

Reported in At Targheeb from Bukhaari and Muslim

COMMENTARY

In the above Hadith 'standing' refers to 'salaah as well as any other form of 'ibaadah, as for example thikr, tilaa-wah etc. The phrase '... with sincere hope of gaining reward', means that one should be sincerely occupied with 'ibaadah solely for the pleasure of Allah and to receive reward from Him. This should not be done for others to see, or to deceive them. According to Khat'taabi it means that one should have complete faith in the promise that any deed shall be rewarded and thus one must stand before Allah with earnestness and enthusiasm. Neither should one think of this 'ibaadah as a burden, nor should there be any doubt about the reward which will be granted. After all it is a known fact that when one aims at a high goal and desire to have a great reward, while at the same time having complete certainty of receiving it, the burden of striving hard along an arduous path to attain that goal becomes easy. Similarly the burden of standing for long hours becomes easy. This is the reason why those who had become spiritually elevated in Allah's sight find it easy to remain in 'ibaadah almost at all times.

It will be noted that the Hadith speaks about previous sins being forgiven. The 'ulamaa have said that this forgiveness are mentioned in the Hadith above and other Ahaadith, refers only to minor sins. Major sins can only be forgiven, according to the Qur'aan after sincere repentance, with the vow and promise never to return to such sins again. This is the reason why the 'ulamaa are unanimous that major sins are not forgiven except by sincere repentance. Hence whenever forgiveness of sins mentioned in the Ahaadith the 'ulamaa specify it to be minor sins.

My late father (May Allah bless him and grant him light in his resting place) used to say that the word 'minor' has been omitted here for two reasons.

Firstly, he says, a true muslim is one on whom major sins should not rest, because whenever a major sin has been committed, he will never rest or find peace until he has sincerely repented to Allah (begging) for forgiveness and promising not to do the same in future.

Secondly, my late father used to say, when such great and blessed days and nights come along, when a true muslim stands before Allah in prayer and adoration, hoping to gain reward, it is a fact that the true muslim in his conscience should feel greatly grieved for previous sins. This grief over sins and the resolution not to return to such acts are the most important requirements of towbah. This means that on such days and nights the repentance for major sins is automatic, (leaving only minor sins to be forgiven). It is best however that when a night like Laylatul Qadr comes along, one who has committed major sins should first of all verbally repent with a heart full of sincere longing for forgiveness so that Allah in His infinite mercy may forgive all forms of sins. And when you do, remember me too in your duaa's. (The publishers request the same).

(٢) عَنْ أَنَسٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ قَالَ دَخَلَ رَمَضَانَ فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ إِنَّ هَذَا الشَّهْرَ قَدْ خَضَرَ كُمْ وَفِيهِ لَيْلَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِنْ أَلْفِ شَهْرٍ مَنْ حُرِمَهَا فَقَدْ حُرِمَ الْخَيْرَ كُلَّهُ وَلَا يَخْصِمُ غَيْرَهَا إِلَّا مَخْرُومٌ رَوَاهُ ابْنُ مَاجَهَ وَإِسْنَادُهُ حَسَنٌ إِنْشَاءَ اللَّهِ كَذَا فِي التَّرْغِيبِ وَفِي الْمَشْكُوتِ عَنْهُ إِلَّا كُلَّ مُحَرَّمٍ

HADITH NO. 2

Anas رضي الله عنه reports, "Once when Ramadhaan commenced, the Messenger of Allah صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم said, 'A month has verily dawned over you wherein lies a night better than one thousand months. Whoever is deprived of its blessings has indeed deprived of (almost) all good. And none is deprived of its good except he who is completely unfortunate'".

Reported by Ibn Majah.

COMMENTARY

Who can have doubt as to the misfortune of the person who deprives himself of the great good of Laylatul Qadr? (Who can doubt the misfortune of the one who misses all the bestowed favours? Indeed there are so many of us). There are those who during the course of their services and duties of employment have to stay awake throughout the year at night. What difficulty can there be for people like these, should they for the sake of gaining the reward of over eighty years 'ibaadah, stay awake at night for this month in the way of Allah's service?

For them the task should not be too difficult, but, because of lack of interest, there is no urge in the heart. If that was present, then not one night, but a thousand nights in worshipping Allah would become exceedingly easy.

It is that urge and desire that we must create. After all there must have been some reason why Rasulullah ﷺ had performed such lengthy 'salaah that his feet even became swollen. This he did despite having firmly believed the promises and glad tidings which Allah had given him. We also profess to be his followers. Those who really appreciated these opportunities of 'ibaadah did what was necessary and set an example to the ummah. They left no room for the critics to say, "Who could do it better or who is more capable of following these examples". It is a matter of convincing the heart, that for those who desire doing things, the most difficult task presents no hardship. This could only be achieved by remaining with a recognised Shaikh for spiritual guidance.

Let us look at the example of the following illustrious sons of Islaam. One such man was 'Umar رضي الله عنه who, having performed his 'Ishaa' 'salaah used to return home and then remain in 'salaah throughout the night until the athaan was heard for fajr. Then there is the example of the pious Khaleefa Uthmaan رضي الله عنه who, after fasting the whole day (almost throughout the year) used to spend the whole night in 'salaah, apart from having a little sleep during part of the first third of the early night. It is well known about him that he used to recite the whole Qur'aan during one Rak'ah. In the Ihya 'Ulumid Deen by Imaam Ghazaali, Abu 'Taalib Makki makes mention about forty men from among the taabi'iy, who used to perform fajr 'salaah with the same wudhu with which they had per-

formed their 'Ishaa' 'salaah. This has been reported by many authentic narrators.

Shaddaad رضي الله عنه was one of the sahaabah who used to lie awake throughout the night turning from side to side until fajr. Then he used to say, "O Allah, the fear for the fire of Jahannam has driven away sleep from my eyes". Aswad bin Yazeed رضي الله عنه apart from sleeping a little between Maghrib and 'Ishaa', used to remain in 'ibaadah throughout the night during Ramadhaan. Now let us look at a man like Sa'iyd ibn Musayyib رضي الله عنه it is said that he used to perform 'Ishaa' and fajr with the same wudhu for fifty years. Then there is the example of 'Sila bin Ashyam رضي الله عنه who after spending a whole night in Allah's worship, used to say at the break of day, "O Allah, I am not fit to beg of You Jannah but all I beseech from You now is that You save me from Jahannam".

Qataadah رضي الله عنه was a man who used to finish the recitation of the Qur'aan every three nights of Ramadhaan but during the latter ten nights he used to complete the whole Qur'aan every night. About Imaam Abu Haneefah R.A. it is well known that for forty years he performed 'Ishaa and the following morning's fajr 'salaah with the same wudhu. To doubt or disbelieve is the denial of true historical facts. When his companions inquired of him as to where he had obtained the strength for that, he replied, "It is in answer to a special duaa' which I made to Allah in the name of the blessedness of His special names". He merely slept a little in the afternoons about which he said, "In the Hadith we are advised to do that". In other words, even in the afternoon sleep he used to follow the sunnah. This same Imaam Abu Haneefah R.A. while reciting the Qur'aan used to cry so much that his neighbours used to feel pity for him. Once he wept the whole night, crying while reciting the following verse time and again:

بَلِ السَّاعَةُ مَوْعِدُهُمْ وَالسَّاعَةُ أَذْيُ وَأَمَرٌ

"Nay the Hour (of Judgement) is the time promised for them (for their recompense) and that hour will be most grievous and bitter". (Suratul Qamar: 46).

Ibrahim Ibn Ad'ham R.A. went so far not to sleep in Ramadhaan neither by night nor by day. Imaam Shaafi'iyy

R.A. used to recite the Qur'aan about sixty times in his 'salaah, in the days and nights of Ramadhaan. Apart from these few there were countless others saintly souls who used to act diligently on the injunctions of the verse:

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ

"I have only created jinn and human that they may serve Me".
(Suratuth Thaariyaat: 56).

Nothing is difficult for those who have a will to practice. These are examples of those who have gone before. But today too there are many who with the same devotion, serve Allah and according to their own times turn night into day in the service of Allah. Even in these times of evil and iniquity there are those who in their saintly manner follow the example of Rasulullah ﷺ. Leisure and comfort should not prevent one from diligent devotion. Nor are wordly errand obstacles.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Allah says, 'O son of Aadam, spend your time in my service and I shall enrich you with independence and freedom from want, and I remove poverty from you. Otherwise I shall fill you with obligations and duties while your poverty and needs shall not disappear". How true, and we see the truth of this daily.

(There are people who serve only Allah, while having no apparent means of earning anything and yet they need nothing. On the other hand we see people striving hard to earn wordly things and necessities. They become so engaged in their task that no time is left for 'ibaadah. Then too, inspite of spending all their time seeking material needs, they remain full of wordly desires, necessities and obligations. Translator).

(۳) عَنْ أَنَسٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ إِذَا كَانَ لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ نَزَلَ جِبْرِيلُ فِي كِتَابَةٍ مِنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى كُلِّ عَبْدٍ قَائِمٍ أَوْ قَاعِدٍ يَذْكُرُ اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ فَإِذَا كَانَ يَوْمٌ عِينِهِمْ يَفْعَلُ يَوْمَ فِطْرِهِمْ بَاهِي بِهِمْ مَلَائِكَتُهُ فَقَالَ يَا مَلَائِكَتِي مَا جَزَاءُ أَجِيرٍ وَقِي عَمَلُهُ قَالُوا رَبَّنَا جَزَاؤُهُ أَنْ يُؤْفَى أَجْرُهُ قَالَ مَلَائِكَتِي عِينِي وَإِمَائِي قَضَوْا فَرِيضَتِي عَلَيْهِمْ ثُمَّ خَرَجُوا يَتَعَبَّوْنَ إِلَى الدُّعَاءِ

وَعَزَّيْنِي وَجَلَّالِي وَكَرَمِي وَعَلَوِي وَارْتِفَاعِ مَكَانِي لِأَجِيَّتِهِمْ فَيَقُولُ ارْجِعُوا فَقَدْ
 غَفَرْتُ لَكُمْ وَبَدَلْتُ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ حَسَنَاتٍ قَالَ فَيَرْجِعُونَ مَغْفُورًا لَهُمْ رَوَاهُ الْبَيْهَقِيُّ فِي
 شُعَبِ الْإِيمَانِ كَذَا فِي الْمَشْكُوتِ

HADITH NO. 3

Anas رضي الله عنه reports that Rasulullah ﷺ said, "On the Night of Power Jibraeel A.S. descends to the earth with the group of angels, praying for blessings on every servant of Allah they see standing in worship or sitting and celebrating Allah's praises. Then on the day of 'Iyd, Allah boasts about them to the angels, "O angels, what is the reward of that employee who had fully completed his service?" They reply, 'O our Sustainer, his reward should be given in full'. To this Allah replies; 'O My angels, verily My servants, the males among them as well as the females have performed the obligatory duty upon them, thereafter they set forth to the 'Iydgah raising their voices in prayer to Me. I swear by My honour, by My Grace, by My High position of greatness, that I shall surely answer the prayer of those people". Thereafter Allah says (addressing the people) "Return, certainly I have forgiven your sins and have exchanged your evil deeds with righteous ones". Rasulullah ﷺ said, "Those people then return (from the 'Iydgah) in forgiven state.

Reported by Bayhaqi in Shu-abul Iymaan.

COMMENTARY

In this Hadith it is clearly mentioned that Jibraeel A.S. comes down with the angels. The author of Ghaaliyatul Mawaa-'ithz quotes from the Ghunyah of Shaikh Abdul Qaadir Jilaani that in a Hadith reported by Ibn Abbas (R.A.) it is mentioned that Jibraeel A.S., after his descent commands the angels to proceed to the house of every one busy with ibaadah, and to shake his hand. Thereupon the angels spread forth visiting every house whether big or small, whether in the jungle or on a ship wherein a believing worshipper resides, to shake his hand. However, certain houses are not entered. The house in which there is a dog or a pig. The house in which there is a person in state of Janaabah, which has resulted from adultery or fornication, and a house wherein pictures of men and animals are displayed. How unfortunate it is that many Muslim's

houses do not have the angels entering simply because there are pictures of men and animals being displayed, solely for the sake of adding what appears to be a bit of adornment.

Only one picture may have been hung by one careless member of the household and the whole house (dwelling) is completely deprived of blessings.

(٤) عَنْ عَائِشَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهَا قَالَتْ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ تَعَرَّوْا لَيْلَةَ الْبَقْدَرِ فِي الْوَيْثِرِ مِنَ الْعَشْرِ الْآخِرِ مِنْ رَمَضَانَ مَشْكُورَةً عَنِ الْبَخَارِيِّ

HADITH NO. 4

Aa'ishah radhial-laahu an-haa reports that Rasulullah صلواته عليه وسلم said, "Seek Laylatul Qadr among the odd numbered nights of the last ten days of the month of Ramadhaan".

Reported in Mishkaat.

COMMENTARY

We come to the question: "When is Laylatul Qadr? The above Hadith commands us to seek it among the last ten nights of Ramadhaan. According to the vast majority of authorities, the last ten nights commence on 21st night. Such is the case that whether the month of Ramadhaan consists of 29 days or 30 days, one should seek Laylatul Qadr on the 21st, 23rd, 25th, 27th or 29th night. If the month is 29 days then too, these will be termed as the last ten (Akheer Asharah)

Ibn Hazm has a different opinion, saying that the word Asharah as used in the Hadith means ten. As such the above calculation will only be correct where the month of Ramadhaan consists of thirty days. However, when there are only twenty nine days in the month (as often happens), the last ten days in the month will commence with the 29th day and the night being the 20th night. According to this calculation it will mean that the unevenly numbered nights will be the 20th, 22nd, 24th, 26th and 28th night.

(With due respect to a greatly learned Aalim like Ibn Hazm, the majority of 'ulama do not agree with him, the reason being that I'tikaaf is sunnah during the last ten days of Ramadhaan). All the 'ulama are unanimous that when Rasulullah went into I'tikaaf in search of haq, he entered

the Musjid to commence seclusion on the 21st night of Ramadhaan.

ADVICE

Though there is great possibility of Laylatul Qadr being on the odd nights from the 21st onwards, there does also exist the likelihood that it could fall during the last ten nights. The best advice one can give here is that one should spend each night from the twentieth onwards in *ibaadah*, so that one may be sure of having acquired the blessings of Laylatul Qadr. Ten or eleven nights is definitely not so difficult if one looks at the great reward that is granted.

(٥) عَنْ عَبَادَةَ بْنِ الصَّامِتِ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ قَالَ خَرَجَ النَّبِيُّ ﷺ لِيُخْبِرَ بَلَيْلَةَ الْقَدْرِ فَتَلَا حَىٰ فَلَانَ وَفَلَانٌ قَرَفَتْ وَعَسَىٰ أَنْ يَكُونَ خَيْرًا لَّكُمْ فَاتَمِسُوا فِي الثَّاسِعَةِ وَالسَّابِعَةِ وَالْخَامِسَةِ مَشْكُورًا عَنِ الْبَخَارِيِّ

HADITH NO. 5

'Ubaadah bin 'Saamit رضي الله عنه said, 'Once Rasulullāh ﷺ came out to inform us the true date of Laylatul Qadr. (Unfortunately at that time) an argument took place between two muslim men, whereupon he said, "I came out in order to inform you as to when Laylatul Qadr was, but because two people argued (the fixing of the correct date) was taken away. Perhaps that is better for you. So seek it among the ninth, seventh and fifth nights".

Reported in Mishkaat.

COMMENTARY

Three important points are referred to in this Hadith. Firstly, there is mention of an argument which resulted in the knowledge of Laylatul Qadr being withheld from us. Arguments are always the cause of loss of blessings. Once Rasulullāh ﷺ inquired of the companions, "Shall I inform you of some action that is better than 'salaah, fasting and charity?" The companions replied, "Certainly". Rasulullāh ﷺ then said, "Maintaining peaceful and good relations amongst yourselves is most virtuous for verily arguments among yourselves eliminates faith". This means

that just as the razor removes hair from the head so does arguments amongst yourself remove faith.

This is indeed an illness among us. Even those among us who appear exceptionally religious and busy with thikr are victims of these arguments and strife. Firstly we should carefully study Rasulullah ﷺ saying, then check our conduct in which pride prevents us to submit towards natural conciliation. In the first chapter of this book (where the etiquet of fasting is discussed) we read that Rasulullah ﷺ said, "To insult a muslim is the most despicable and obnoxious type of achievement. We often go to such extent that when we cross words with muslims in arguments, we do not even care for a muslim's or refrain from insults. In such cases no notice seems to be taken of the injunctions of Allah and His messenger. The Holy Qur'aan says.

"Argue not among yourselves, otherwise your courage will go and your strength depart, and be patient and persevering, for Allah is with those who patiently persevere".

(Surah Anfaal: 46)

It is now the duty of those who always seek to injure and destroy the honour and dignity of others to sit back and think how much harm they have done to themselves. They should think how much they have through these despicable deeds, themselves become despicable in Allah's sight and in the sight of those around them. The person who serves relationship with his brothers for more than three days and dies in this state will go straight to Jahan-nam. Rasulullah ﷺ said that on every Monday and Thursday the actions of servants are brought before Allah. Then through His Mercy (as a result of certain pious deeds) forgiveness is granted except to the idolators. However, regarding any two people between whom an argument had taken place, and friendship is cut off it shall be said "Leave their affair aside until such time that they become reconciled".

Another Hadith states that when actions are presented before Allah, every Monday and Thursday, repentance is accepted from those who repent, and forgiveness is granted to those who seek pardon. As for those who had arguments, they are left as they are.

Another Hadith further teaches us that on Shabe-Bara'at (the night of the 15th Shabaan) the mercy of Allah

is directed at all Allah's creation and forgiveness is freely granted except for two types of persons. One, a kaafir (disbeliever), and the one who harbours bad thoughts against others in another Hadith it is stated: There are three kinds of people whose 'salaah does not ascend one hand span above their heads for acceptance. Mentioned among these are the ones who argue among themselves.

In the above paragraphs I have digressed from the point under discussion. It was not my intention to mention all these Ahaadith on arguments. I merely did it to bring to our notice this great evil which we underestimate, so much so that even those whom we consider to be noble and righteous are guilty of it. To Allah is my plea, and He is the One we seek assistance from. On the other hand, be informed that this fighting, use of harsh words and cutting oneself off from another, will only be regarded as a crime and evil in Islaam, when done out of enmity and hatred over worldly matters. It is permissible to break off relations with somebody because of evil deeds or because of some religious matters (wherein he is in the wrong and blameable). Ibn Umar رضي الله عنه once quoted a saying of Rasulullah صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم to which his son said something, which outwardly appears as if he objected to it. The result was that Ibn Umar رضي الله عنه never again spoke to that son for as long as he lived. There are numerous similar instances reported of the sahaabah.

Often we too cut off relations with people and claim that it is for the sake of the Deen. Allah as All-knowing, All-seeing and He alone knows the true state of affairs. He knows which relationships are broken off because of the Deen and which are cut off because of the hurt to our honour, pride and dignity.

The second point to which the Hadith under discussion draws attention is the fact that man should be satisfied and accept Allah's ruling in all matters. For example, even though it seems that the loss of the knowledge as to when Laylatul Qadr actually falls, is a great loss of blessing, it has to be accepted because it is from Allah. For this reason Rasulullah صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم says, "It is better for us that way". One should ponder over this, Allah is at all times merciful to His servants.

Even when someone is overtaken by a great calamity because of his own evil deeds. He needs only appeal to His

Creator, admit his own weakness, and that same calamity becomes the cause for greater good. Nothing is impossible for Allah.

Our 'ulama have mentioned several advantages in not knowing the proper time for Laylatul Qadr. Firstly, had we known the actual time for this blessed night, there would have been so many who would not have served Allah at all during the year or on other nights. They would only wait for the prescribed night in which to perform their *ibaadah*. As things are now, one has to stay awake and be in *ibaadah* for quite a number of nights hoping that each night is perhaps the night. (This means more nights in Allah's service and reward for the same).

Secondly, there are among us those who just do not seem to be able to avoid evil. How extremely dangerous and unfortunate for them would it be, when in spite of knowing that such and such a night is Laylatul Qadr and then still spend it in sin and evil? Once Rasulullah ﷺ, on entering the masjid saw one of the sahaabh sleeping on one side. He said to Ali رضي الله عنه : "Wake him up so that he can make wudhu". This Ali رضي الله عنه did and then addressed the Nabi ﷺ thus, "O Messenger of Allah, you are always first to hurry towards any good deed. Why did you not wake him up yourself?" To this Rasulullah ﷺ replied, "I fear on his behalf that this man may refuse, and refusal to my command is kufr. If he refused your command, it would not be kufr (disbelief). Similarly Allah in His mercy does not approve that in spite of knowing which night is the real one, one should still spend it in sin and evil.

Thirdly, there are amongst some who find it possible to spend one, two or three nights in *ibaadah*, while we do not know which is the night of Power. Now say for arguments sake, we did not know which night Laylatul Qadr would be and in spite of that, for one reason or another, within or outside our control, we allowed that night to go by without *ibaadah*, it is an almost certain fact that thereafter, for the rest of Ramadhaan, no other night would have been spent in *ibaadah*.

Fourthly, every night spent in *ibaadah* in search of Laylatul Qadr is a night for which a separate reward is granted.

Fifthly, We have read that Allah boasts to His angels about those believers who exert themselves in ibaadah during Ramadhaan. Now when they spend more nights in Allah's worship, more such chances of boasting arise.

In spite of not knowing when it is the night of Laylatul Qadr and although they have only a vague idea about its fixed time, still they exert themselves to the utmost in Allah's service night after night. If such is their exertion when they do not know then how more will they exert themselves when it is known to them?

There are sure to be advantages. Due to such blessings Allah often keeps certain things secret to Himself, as for example, the "Ismul A'azam" (the great name of Allah, whereby if we call upon Him, He answers). Similarly there is a special moment on the day of Jumu-ah when prayers are answered. This time too is not known with complete certainty. There are numerous other things which are included in this category. It is possible that because of the argument that took place the fixing of Laylatul Qadr during that Ramadhaan was caused to be forgotten. However, because of the other benefits the knowledge of the fixed date was no revealed.

The third point to which attention is drawn is that Laylatul Qadr should be sought among the 9th, 7th and 5th. By reading these in conjunction with the other Ahaadith, we come to know that this refers to the last ten nights of Ramadhaan. So which nights are these? If we start from the 20th, counting up, then these three nights are the 25th, 27th and 29th. If, on the other hand we start counting from the 29th down, where Ramadhaan has 29 days, these nights are the 21st, 23rd, and 25th. And in the case where the month has 30 days it would be 22nd 24th and 26th.

From the above one can see how much uncertainty there is about the correct date. Among the learned "ulama" there are approximately fifty different opinions. Because of this reason, some "ulama" have said that Laylatul Qadr does not occur on one and the same night every year. If in the one year it occurred on one night then the following year it occurred on another night. There are times when Rasulullah ﷺ commanded the companions to search among a number of nights, whereas at other times again he used to fix a certain night.

Abu Hurayrah رضي الله عنه reports that once during a conversation with the companions, mention was made of Laylatul Qadr. Rasulullah صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم asked "What is the date today?" They replied, "The 22nd of Ramadhaan. The Nabi صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم said, "Search for Laylatul Qadr in the night following this day.

Abu Tharr رضي الله عنه reports that he inquired of Rasulullah صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم whether Laylatul Qadr was only granted for the time of the duration of Rasulullah's صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم life, or whether it continued to come after him. Rasulullah صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم replied, "It continues until Qiyaamah". I then inquired "In which section of Ramadhaan does it come? The Nabi صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم replied, "Search for it in the first ten and in the last ten days". Thereafter Rasulullah صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم became busy with other work, I waited, and finding another chance inquired, "In which section of those ten does Laylatul Qadr come? Upon this Rasulullah صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم became so angry with me as he had never been before or after, and he said, "If it had been Allah's object to make it known, would He not have informed? Search for it among the last seven nights, and ask no more". In another Hadith again Rasulullah صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم is reported to have told one sahaabah that Laylatul Qadr was on 23rd night.

Ibn Abbaas رضي الله عنه related, "While sleeping once, somebody said to me in my dream, 'Rise up. This is Laylatul Qadr'. I woke up and proceeded in haste to Rasulullah صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم. There I found him in 'salaah. That was the 23rd night". According to other reports again, the 24th is Laylatul Qadr. Abdullah ibn Mas'ood رضي الله عنه said, "Whoever remains all nights of the year in ibaadah can find Laylatul Qadr". (In other words the blessed night moves throughout the year and does not necessarily have to come in Ramadhaan only).

Ibn Mas'ood رضي الله عنه reports this view from Nabi صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم, Durre Manthoor when this was mentioned to Ubay bin Kaab he said Abdullah ibn Mas'ood رضي الله عنه meant people will stay awake only on this night and become contented". Thereafter he swore by Allah that Laylatul Qadr comes on 27th. This is also the view held by numerous sahaabah as well as taabi-iyin.

Among the Imaams, the well known opinion of Imaam

Abu Hanifa R.A. is that Laylatul Qadr moves throughout the year, while another view of this is that it moves about throughout the month of Ramadhaan. His famous student followers, Imaam Muhammad and Imaam Abu Yousuf, however, were of the opinion that this night is fixed on one special night which is unknown, during the Holy month. While the Shaaf-i y's believe that it occurs probably on 21st, Imaam Ahmad R.A. and Imaam Maalik R.A. hold view that it comes only among the odd nights of the last ten nights of Ramadhaan, moving from year to year and is not fixed. But as for the vast majority of 'ulama their hope lies in Laylatul Qadr coming annually on 27th night.

Ibn Arabi R.A. says, "In my opinion the view of those who believe that Laylatul Qadr comes on various nights throughout the year, is most correct, because twice have I seen it in Sha'baan once on the 15th, and once on 19th, and twice have I seen it in the middle ten nights of Ramadhaan, the 13th, and the 18th. And I have also seen it on every odd night of the last ten. For this reason I am certain that it could occur on any night of the year but comes mostly in Ramadhaan.

Shaah Waliyullah R.A. of Delhi believed that Laylatul Qadr comes twice every year: (a) One Laylatul Qadr is that one on which Allah's commands are revealed (to the angels). This is also the night on which the holy Qur'aan was sent down from the Al Lowhul Mahfuz to the heavens. This night does not come in Ramadhaan alone but moves and can come on any other night of the year. However, the night on which the Holy Qur'aan was revealed fell in Ramadhaan and mostly falls during Ramadhaan. (b) The second Laylatul Qadr is the one of tremendous spiritual value, when angels descend in large numbers, while shay'taans are held back, and a time when prayers and ibaadah are accepted. This comes only in Ramadhaan during the 'uneven' nights of the last ten days. (This view of Shaah Waliyullah used to be most acceptable to my late father).

Anyway, whether there are two Laylatul Qadrs or whether there is only one, the fact still remains that one has to search for it according to ones courage and ability. If not throughout the year, then in Ramadhaan. If that should prove difficult, then during the last ten days. When that too seems a bit too much to be expected, then only the odd numbered nights of the last ten days. When one has wasted

The salaah of Maghrib and Esha throughout the year should be performed with Jamaa-ah; because if it is Laylatul Qadr the reward for both is so much more. It is a great blessing of Allah that when one endeavours for religious aims and cannot make a success, he is still rewarded for the effort. And inspite of this, there are those who do not leave a stone unturned in their services for Deen. On the contrary; in worldly affairs, when one does not break even his efforts are also written off as a loss. Then too in this latter case numerous people spend their time, efforts and wealth in worldly things that are fruitless and without purpose, and do not hold any reward or consolation.

(٦) عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ الصَّامِتِ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ أَنَّهُ سَأَلَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ﷺ عَنْ لَيْلَةِ الْقَدْرِ فَقَالَ فِي رَمَضَانَ فِي الْعَشْرِ الْآخِرِ فَإِنَّهَا فِي لَيْلَةٍ وَفِي إِحْدَى وَعِشْرِينَ أَوْ ثَلَاثَ وَعِشْرِينَ أَوْ خَمْسَ وَعِشْرِينَ أَوْ سَبْعَ وَعِشْرِينَ أَوْ تِسْعَ وَعِشْرِينَ أَوْ آخِرَ لَيْلَةٍ مِنْ رَمَضَانَ مَنْ قَامَهَا إِيْمَانًا وَاحْسَابًا غُفِرَ لَهُ مَا تَقَلَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِهِ وَمِنْ أَمَارِئِهَا أَكَلَهَا لَيْلَةً بِلَجَّةٍ صَافِيَةٍ سَاجِدَةٍ لَاحَارَةً وَلَا بَارِدَةً كَانَ فِيهَا قَمَرًا سَاطِعًا وَلَا يَحُلُّ لِنَجْمٍ أَنْ يُرْمَى بِهِ بِذَلِكَ اللَّيْلَةِ حَتَّى الصَّبَاحَ وَمِنْ أَمَارِئِهَا أَنَّ الشَّمْسَ تَطْلُعُ صَبِيحَتَهَا لِاشْتِعَاعِ لَهَا مُسْتَوِيَةً كَأَنَّهَا الْقَمَرُ لَيْلَةُ الْبَدْرِ وَحَرَّمَ اللَّهُ عَلَى الشَّيْطَانِ أَنْ يُعْرِجَ مَعَهَا يَوْمَئِذٍ

در منثور عن أحمد والبيهقي وعبد بن نصر وغيرهم

HADITH NO. 6

'Ubaadah bin 'Saamit رضى الله عنه reports that he asked Rasulullah صلى الله عليه وسلم about Laylatul Qadr. He replied, "It is in Ramadhaan during the last ten days, on the unevenly numbered nights, either the 21st, 23rd, 25th, 27th and 29th or the last night of the month of Ramadhaan. Whosoever stands in ibaadah on this night with sincere faith and with genuine hopes of gaining reward his previous sins

will be forgotten. Among the signs of this night is that it is a serene, quite, shining night, not hot, nor cold and (as if through the amount of spiritual light) the moon remains clear, without any rays. No stars are flung (at the shayaa'teen) on that night until the break of dawn. Another sign is that the sun rises without any radiant beams of light, appearing rather like the moon in its fullness. On that day Allah prohibits the shayaa'teen from rising up with the sun".

Reported in Durru Manthoor.

COMMENTARY

Part of what has been mentioned in this Hadith has already been dealt with. Some signs are mentioned about the actual night. These signs are clear and need no further explanation. Apart from these signs, however, there are other signs too, as found in the Hadith and in the experience of those who had the fortune to encounter Laylatul Qadr. The sign that is, however, most common in the Hadith and generally witnessed is the rising of the sun 'without any radiant beams of light'. The other signs besides this are not necessarily always found. One sahaabi, Ab'da bin abi Lubaabah says, "On the evening of the 27th, I tasted the water of the sea and it was sweet". Ayoob bin Khaalid R.A. said, "When I once had to perform ghusl (bath) with sea water, then on tasting it found it sweet. This was on the 23rd night". Some of the Mashaa-ikh wrote that on the evening of Laylatul Qadr everything prostrates on the ground then return to their positions. These are however things that are only shown to the extremely pious ones and are not seen by the ordinary person.

(٧) عَنْ عَائِشَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهَا قَالَتْ قُلْتُ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ أَرَأَيْتَ إِنْ عَلِمْتُ
أَيَّ لَيْلَةٍ لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ مَا أَقُولُ فِيهَا قَالَ قُولِي ااَللَّهُمَّ إِنَّكَ عَفُوٌّ رَحِيمٌ فَاعْفُ
عَنِّي رَوَاهُ أَحْمَدُ وَابْنُ مَاجَهَ وَالتِّرْمِذِيُّ وَصَحَّحَهُ كَذَا فِي الْمَشْكُوتِ

HADITH NO. 7

Aa-isha radhiyallah anha reports; "O Messenger of Allah, when I find myself in Laylatul Qadr, what shall I say?" The Nabi ﷺ replied, 'Say O Allah Thou art One

who pardons, Thou lovest to pardon, so grant me forgiveness”.

Reported by Aḥmad, Ibn Majah and Tirmizhi.

COMMENTARY

This is indeed an all inclusive prayer, wherein one begs Allah in His infinite grace should forgive sins. What else would one require? Imaan Sufyaan Thowry R.A. used to say that to keep oneself busy on this night with duaa’ is better than any other forms of ibaadah. Ibn Rajab R.A. says that one should not only remain busy with duaa’, but should also take part in all other forms of ’ibaadah as well, such as the recitation of Qur’aan, ’salaah, duaa’, prescribed devotions etc. This latter opinion is considered correct and close to what Rasoolullah ﷺ has said, as already mentioned in previous Ahaadith.

CHAPTER THREE

I'ITIKAAF (SECLUSION IN THE MUSJID)

The meaning of I'itikaaf is to seclude oneself in the musjid with the express niyyah (intention) of I'itikaaf. According to the Hanafi school of thought, there are three different types of I'itikaaf.

- (a) **Waajib I'itikaaf:**
This I'itikaaf becomes compulsory when a person makes it obligatory upon himself. An example of this is, when a person makes a vow to Allah that if Allah fulfills a certain wish of his, he will undertake to perform so many days I'itikaaf. In this case the moment his wish is fulfilled, I'itikaaf becomes compulsory. A person may just make unconditional vow whereby he makes I'itikaaf waajib upon himself for certain number of days. This becomes a Waajib duty on him from that moment onwards.
- (b) **Sunnah I'itikaaf:**
This was the general practice of Rasulullah and it means to seclude oneself inside the musjid for the last ten days of Ramadhaan.
- (c) **Nafl I'itikaaf:**
There is no special time or specific number of days for Nafl I'itikaaf. A person may make niyyah for any number of days at any time, even for his whole life. Imaam Abu Haneefah R.A. however states that it must be for at least one full day.

Imaam Muhammad R.A. states that there is no limit on the minimum period of time. The fatwa is on this latter view. Therefore it is desirable for anyone entering a musjid to make the niyyah (intention) of I'itikaaf for the period that he will remain in the musjid. So while he is in ibaadah he also gains the reward of I'itikaaf.

(In view of the above, it is advisable that everyone entering the musjid to join the congregation prayer, should on entering the musjid, make the niyyah for I'itikaaf. In that case, it means that as long as he remains busy with 'salaah, thikr, listening to lectures or sermons, he also receives

reward for the I'tikaaf). I always observed that my late father used to make niyyah for I'tikaaf while stepping into the masjid with his right foot. Occasionally, by way of teaching and reminding his followers, he used to raise his voice when reciting the niyyah.

OBJECTS AND ADVANTAGES OF I'TIKAAF

The reward for I'tikaaf is great. Rasulullah ﷺ constantly performed I'tikaaf. The example of the one who resides in the masjid in I'tikaaf is like a person, who having gone to a certain place for something, remains there until it is granted.

When someone comes begging to our door and then refuses to leave until he has been granted his request, I am sure that even the one with the hardest heart amongst us will eventually accede to his request. How much more merciful is Allah, Who even grants without reason.

Hence, when one isolates himself from all wordly things and goes to Allah's door, what doubt can there be for his plea to be accepted. And when Allah has favoured someone, others cannot describe the ecstasy and enrichment of such limitless treasures. How could a person ever describe what he has not obtained? However, can an under-aged person describe adulthood? Nevertheless, this is a course in which one shall give nothing else besides total dedication or else be taken away for the final meeting of his creator. Allaama ibn Qayyim, on explaining the significance of I'tikaaf, writes that actual aim of I'tikaaf is to divert the heart from everything except Allah, and to join it with Allah alone, thereby forming a complete spiritual connection with the creator.

All worldly connections are thus cut off for the sake of gaining Allah's attention. All thoughts, desire, love and devotion become centred around Him. In consequence His love is attained—a love and friendship that will be the only friend in the loneliness of the grave. When a person has that, then who can possibly imagine the great ecstasy with which that time of the grave will be spent? In Maraquil Falaah, the author writes that I'tikaaf, when properly and sincerely performed, is a most virtuous deed. One cannot possibly enumerate all the great advantages and benefits in it. In actual fact, what takes place in I'tikaaf, is that the heart is drawn away from everything else except the Cre-

ator, while our whole life is actually laid down at His doorstep. One remains in 'ibaadah all the time. Even when one is asleep, one is still in His service, striving for nearness to Him. Allah says (according to a Hadith): "Whoever draws near to Me (the length of) one hand, then I draw nearer to him (the length of) two hands; and whoever draws near to Me by walking, I draw near to him by running".

In I'tikaaf one goes to Allah's house and the most Kind Host always honours a guest who visits Him. The one in I'tikaaf also attains safety in Allah's fortress where no enemy can reach. Besides this there are numerous other virtues and distinctive features of this important 'ibaadah.

WHERE TO PERFORM I'TIKAAF

The best of places for I'tikaaf, for males, is the Musjidul Haraam in Mecca. The next best is the Musjidul Nabawi in Madina, and the next best is Baitul Mukaddas. Thereafter, comes the Jaam'i Musjid in one's own town, and last but not least, the musjid nearest to one's home. Imaam Abu Hanifah R.A. stipulate the musjid should be one wherein the five daily prayers are performed, while Imaam Abu Yousuf R.A. and Imaam Muhammad R.A. are agreed that any musjid according to the Shariah can be entered for I'tikaaf, even if there is no regular 'salaah with Jamaa-ah.

As for the females, they should perform I'tikaaf in the musjid inside their homes. Where, however, no musjid exists and the desire for I'tikaaf be there, one room of the house should be set aside for this purpose, I'tikaaf is in fact an easier task for women. A special section of the house, most commonly the prayer room, is set aside wherein they seclude themselves, remaining in 'ibaadah. The domestic duties can then be performed by daughters or servants, and the women in I'tikaaf, while remaining in a section of her own house, is spiritually rewarded for it. It is so very unfortunate that in spite of the ease, our women folk still remain deprived of the blessings of I'tikaaf. (We here in South Africa are even more negligent of this sunnah, so much so, that many have not even heard of it—Translator).

(١) عَنْ أَبِي سَعِيدٍ الْخُدْرِيِّ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ﷺ اغْتَكَفَ الْعَشْرَ الْأَوَّلَ مِنْ رَمَضَانَ ثُمَّ اغْتَكَفَ الْعَشْرَ الْأَوْسَطَ فِي قُبَّةٍ تُرْكِيَّةٍ ثُمَّ أَطْلَعَ رَأْسَهُ فَقَالَ إِنِّي اغْتَكِفُ الْعَشْرَ الْأَوَّلَ أَتَمِسُّ هَذِهِ اللَّيْلَةَ ثُمَّ اغْتَكِفُ الْعَشْرَ الْأَوْسَطَ ثُمَّ أَتَيْتُ فَقِيلَ لِي إِنَّهَا فِي الْعَشْرِ الْآخِرِ فَمَنْ كَانَ اغْتَكَفَ مَعِيَ فَلْيَغْتَكِفِ الْعَشْرَ الْآخِرَ فَقَدْ أُرَيْتُ هَذِهِ اللَّيْلَةَ ثُمَّ أُسَيِّتُهَا وَقَدْ رَأَيْتُنِي أَسْجُدُ فِي مَاءٍ وَطِينٍ مِنْ صَيِّحَتِهَا فَالْتَمِسُوهَا فِي الْعَشْرِ الْآخِرِ وَالتَّمِسُوا فِي كُلِّ وَثْرٍ قَالَ فَمُطِرَتِ السَّمَاءُ بِلُكِ اللَّيْلَةِ وَكَانَ الْمَسْجِدُ عَلَى عَرْشٍ فَوَكَفَ الْمَسْجِدُ فَبَصُرْتُ عَيْنَايَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ﷺ وَعَلَى جَنْبَيْهِ آثَرُ الْمَاءِ وَالطِّينِ مِنْ صَيِّحَةِ إِحْدَى وَعِشْرِينَ مَشْكُورَةً عَنْ الْمُتَّفِقِ عَلَيْهِ بِاخْتِلَافِ اللَّفْظِ

HADITH NO. 1

“Abu Sa’iyd Khudri رضي الله عنه reports that Rasulullah ﷺ once performed I’tikaaf for the first ten days of Ramadhaan. Thereafter he made I’tikaaf in a Turkish tent (inside the masjid) for the middle ten days. Thereafter he raised his head out of the tent and said, “Verily in search of Laylatul Qadr did I perform I’tikaaf for the first ten days, then for the middle ten days. Then someone (an angel) came and told me, “It is in the last ten days whosoever has made I’tikaaf with me should continue for the last ten days”. I had indeed been shown that night and then made to forget, which it shall be. And verily did I see myself prostrating to Allah with my forehead on mud on the morning after the night. Seek Laylatul Qadr the last ten nights of Ramadhaan; seek it among uneven ones”.

Abu Sa’iyd رضي الله عنه says; “That same night it rained. The roof on the masjid leaked, and I looked at Rasulullah’s ﷺ two eyes and on his forehead were remains of water and mud. This was on the morning of the 21st performing sujood in muddy clay”.

Reported in Mishkaat.

COMMENTARY

It used to be the general practice of Rasulullah ﷺ to perform I’tikaaf in Ramadhaan. At times he used to remain in the masjid for the whole month and during the

last year of his life he was in I'tikaaf for twenty days. Because he always secluded himself in the masjid for last ten days, the 'ulama consider it sunnah mu'akkadah to perform I'tikaaf for that period.

From the above Hadith it can be deduced that the major object behind I'tikaaf was to search for Laylatul Qadr. What better manner can there be than to be in I'tikaaf, because one is considered to be in 'ibaadah all the time, whether one is awake or asleep. Furthermore, one in I'tikaaf is free from all daily tasks and thus has all the time to devote to thikrullah, (the remembrance of Allah) and meditation. Throughout Ramadhaan Rasulallah ﷺ exerted himself and increase his 'ibaadah and when the last ten days came along, he had no limit in exerting himself. He himself remained awake throughout the night and awakened his family for the same purpose. Aa-isha radhiyallahu anha reports:

"During Ramadhaan Rasullullah tied his lungi tightly about him, staying awake all night and waking his family (for the purpose of 'ibaadah). "Tied his lungi tightly about him" means either that he knew no limits in exerting himself in 'ibaadah; or that he gave due importance and preference to 'ibaadah, and avoided all forms of sexual contact.

(٢) عَنْ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ﷺ قَالَ فِي الْمُتَكَيِّفِ هُوَ يَتَكَيِّفُ الذُّنُوبَ وَيُجْزَى لَهُ مِنَ الْحَسَنَاتِ كَمَا يَمِلُ الْحَسَنَاتِ كُلَّهَا
مشكوة عن ابن ماجه

HADITH NO. 2

Ibn Abbas رضي الله عنه relates that Rasullullah ﷺ said, "The person performing I'tikaaf remains free from sins, and he is indeed given the same reward as those who do righteous deeds (inspite of not having done those deeds as a result of having been secluded in the masjid)".

Reported in Mishkaat from Ibn Majah.

COMMENTARY

(Note that one remaining secluded in the masjid is not allowed to depart from there for worldly needs. He may only set forth to the outside for the calls of nature, to perform ablution or ghusl or for attending Jumu-ah when that

is not performed in the same masjid, after which he must return forthwith). Now this Hadith points to two great benefits of I'tikaaf.

Firstly one is saved from sin. It is true that it very often happens that one falls into sin without ever intended to do so. (The world all around us is full of temptations). To commit sin in the blessed month of Ramadhaan is indeed a great injustice to ourselves. By remaining secluded in the masjid, one completely avoids the temptation to sin. Secondly, it would appear outwardly that when one is secluded in the masjid, one is automatically at a disadvantage by not being allowed to perform certain good deeds like joining funeral prayers, attending burials visiting the sick, etc. That is not so, because according to this Hadith one is rewarded for these deeds even though not performing them. What a great favour from Allah! How great is Allah's bounty! By performing 'ibaadah one receives the reward of numerous other 'ibaadahs. In fact Allah Ta'ala seeks the slightest cause to bestow His blessings. His blessings could be received in abundance with a little effort and plea. If only we can understand and properly appreciate these favours. That proper appreciation and understanding can only enter our minds when we have the true love and interest for our Deen.

(May Allah grant us that Aameen).

(٣) عَنِ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ أَنَّهُ كَانَ مُتَعَكِّفًا فِي مَسْجِدِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ ﷺ فَأَتَاهُ رَجُلٌ فَسَلَّمَ عَلَيْهِ ثُمَّ جَلَسَ فَقَالَ لَهُ ابْنُ عَبَّاسٍ يَا فُلَانُ أَرَأَيْكَ مُكْتَبًا حَزَنَتُنَا قَالَ نَعَمْ يَا ابْنَ عَمِّ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ لِفُلَانٍ عَلَى حَقٍّ وَلَا وَحَرَمَةٍ صَاحِبِ هَذَا الْقَبْرِ مَا أَقْدِرُ عَلَيْهِ قَالَ ابْنُ عَبَّاسٍ أَفَلَا أَكَلِمَةُ فَيْكَ قَالَ إِنْ أَحْبَبْتَ قَالَ فَاتَّقَلِ ابْنَ عَبَّاسٍ ثُمَّ خَرَجَ مِنَ الْمَسْجِدِ قَالَ لَهُ الرَّجُلُ أَنْسَيْتَ مَا كُنْتَ فِيهِ قَالَ لَا وَلَكِنِّي سَمِعْتُ صَاحِبَ هَذَا الْقَبْرِ ﷺ وَالْعَهْدُ بِهِ قَرِيبٌ فَلَمِعَتْ عَيْنَاهُ وَهُوَ يَقُولُ مَنْ مَثَى فِي حَاجَةِ أَخِيهِ وَبَلَغَ فِيهَا كَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُ مِنْ إِعْجَافِ عَشْرِ مِائِينَ وَمَنْ إِعْجَفَ يَوْمًا إِنْتَعَاءَ وَجْهِ اللَّهِ جَعَلَ اللَّهُ بَيْنَهُ وَبَيْنَ النَّارِ ثَلَاثَ خُتَاوِقٍ أَبَدًا وَمَا بَيْنَ الْخَافِقَيْنِ رَوَاهُ الطَّبْرَانِيُّ فِي الْأَوْسَطِ وَابِيهَقِي وَالْفِطْرُ لَهُ وَالْحَاكِمُ مُخْتَصَرًا وَقَالَ صَحِيحُ الْإِسْنَادِ وَكَذَا فِي التَّرْغِيبِ وَقَالَ السَّيُوطِيُّ فِي الدَّرِّ صَحَّحَهُ الْحَاكِمُ وَضَعَفَهُ ابِيهَقِي

• هكذا في النسخة التي بأيدينا بلفظ حرف النهي وهو الصواب عندى لوجه وقوع في بعض النسخ بلفظ ولاء بالهمزة في آخره وهو تصحيف عندى من الكاتب وعليه قرائن ظاهرة

HADITH NO. 3

Ibn Abbaas رضي الله عنه reports that while he was once performing I'tikaaf in the masjidun Nabawi (Rasulullah's masjid), a certain man came to him, greeted him and sat down. Ibn Abbaas said to him: "I see that you seem sad and troubled". The man replied: "Yes, O son of the uncle of Rasulullah, صلى الله عليه وسلم I am indeed troubled in that I have an obligation to fulfil to someone. I swear by the holiness of the inmate of this honoured resting place (Rasulullah's grave صلى الله عليه وسلم) that I am not able to fulfil this obligation". Ibn Abbaas رضي الله عنه inquired: "Shall I intercede with that person on your behalf?" The man replied: "By all means if you so wish". Ibn Abbaas put on his shoes and proceeded from the Masjid. The man, seeing this said: "Have you then forgotten that you are in I'tikaaf?" With tears filling his eyes Ibn Abbaas رضي الله عنه replied: "No, the time is still fresh in my mind, I heard the esteemed master of this tomb صلى الله عليه وسلم say, "Whoever sets forth in the way and makes an effort of settling a necessary affair on behalf of his brother, that service shall be better for him than to perform I'tikaaf for ten years, and whomsoever performs I'tikaaf for a day, thereby seeking the pleasure of Allah, Allah will open three trenches between him and the fire of hell, the width of each being the distance between heaven and earth".

Reported by 'Tabraani in Al Awsa't.

COMMENTARY

Two things are clear from this Hadith. In the first place we are told, that by way of reward for one day's I'tikaaf, Allah opens three trenches between him and the fire of Jahannam, the width of which being the distance between the heavens and the earth. Hence, for every additional day that I'tikaaf is performed so much more rewarded. In Kashful Ghummah, Allamah Sharaani relates a Hadith wherein Rasulullah صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Whoever performs I'tikaaf for the final ten days of Ramadhaan, for him is the reward of two Haj and two Umrahs and whoever performs I'tikaaf from Maghrib until 'Ishaa' doing nothing except performing 'salaah and reciting the Qur'aan, Allah will prepare a palace in Jannah".

In the second place, we are told that fulfilling the need of a brother brings a reward greater than ten years of I'ti-kaaf. For this reason Ibn Abbaas رضي الله عنه broke off his I'ti-kaaf. It was of course possible for him to continue it afterwards. (What he actually did was to leave the masjid to relieve some suffering of his brother, who was greatly troubled in the heart and mind). The 'Sufis say that Allah has sympathy with very few things as He has with a broken heart. It is for this reason that we have been sternly warned of the pleas to Allah of that person whose heart we hurt through an unjust treatment and persecution. Whenever Rasulullah صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم appointed someone as a governor, amongst the many counsels he used to also say, "Be mindful of the plea of the oppressed".

Note that I'tikaaf breaks when one leaves the masjid even for the duty on behalf of fellow muslim. When that I'ti-kaaf is waajib, it will mean that it has to be performed all over again. Rasulullah never left the masjid except for the calls of nature and wudhu. As for Ibn Abbaas رضي الله عنه leaving the masjid to do some favour to a friend, it was in the same spirit that is reminiscent of that soldier lying near death on the battle field of Yarmouk, refusing to drink water until his neighbour had been given to drink. On the other hand, however, it is possible that Ibn Abbaas رضي الله عنه was performing nafl I'tikaaf, in which case it was permissible for him to break it off.

In conclusion I now wish to quote length Hadith. In many virtues are mentioned, and with this do I conclude this book.

(٤) عَنْ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ أَنَّ سَمِعَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ﷺ يَقُولُ إِنَّ الْجَنَّةَ لَتَبْعَرُ وَتُزَيَّنُ مِنَ الْحَوْلِ إِلَى الْحَوْلِ لِذُحُولِ شَهْرِ رَمَضَانَ فَإِذَا كَانَتْ أَوَّلَ لَيْلَةٍ مِنْ شَهْرِ رَمَضَانَ هَبَّتْ رِيحٌ مِنْ تَحْتِ الْعَرْشِ يُقَالُ لَهَا الْمُمِيزَةُ فَتَصْفَقُ وَرَقُ أَشْجَارِ الْجَنَّةِ وَحَلَقُ الْمَصَارِيحِ فَيَسْمَعُ لِذَلِكَ طَيِّبٌ لَمْ يَسْمَعْ السَّامِعُونَ أَحْسَنَ مِنْهُ فَتَبْرُزُ الْحُورُ الْعَيْنُ حَتَّى يَقِفْنَ بَيْنَ شَرَفِ الْجَنَّةِ فَيَتَأَدَّيْنِ هَلْ مِنْ خَاطِبٍ إِلَى اللَّهِ فَيَرْوِجُهُ ثُمَّ يَقْلُنَ الْحُورُ الْعَيْنُ يَارِضُونَ الْجَنَّةَ مَا هَذِهِ اللَّيْلَةُ فَيَحِيثُهُنَّ بِالثَّلَاثَةِ ثُمَّ يَقُولُ هَذِهِ أَوَّلُ لَيْلَةٍ مِنْ شَهْرِ رَمَضَانَ فَخُتْ أَبْوَابُ الْجَنَّةِ عَلَى الصَّائِمِينَ مِنْ أُمَّةٍ مُحَمَّدٍ ﷺ قَالَ وَيَقُولُ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ يَارِضُونَ افْتَحْ أَبْوَابَ الْجَنَّةِ

وَيَا مَالِكُ اغْلِقِ أَبْوَابَ الْجَحِيمِ عَلَى الصَّائِمِينَ مِنْ أُمَّةِ أَحْمَدَ ﷺ وَيَا جَبْرِئِيلُ
 اهْبِطْ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ فَاصْنِدْ مَرَدَّةَ الشَّيَاطِينِ وَغَلِّهْمُ بِالْأَغْلَالِ ثُمَّ اقْدِفْهُمْ فِي الْبَحَارِ
 حَتَّى لَا يَفْسِدُوا عَلَى أُمَّةِ مُحَمَّدٍ حَبِيبِي ﷺ صِيَامَهُمْ قَالَ وَيَقُولُ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ فِي
 كُلِّ لَيْلَةٍ مِنْ شَهْرِ رَمَضَانَ لِمَنَادٍ يُنَادِي ثَلَاثَ مَرَّاتٍ هَلْ مِنْ سَائِلٍ فَأَعْطِيهِ سُؤْلَهُ
 هَلْ مِنْ تَائِبٍ فَأَتُوبَ عَلَيْهِ هَلْ مِنْ مُسْتَغْفِرٍ فَأَغْفِرَ لَهُ مَنْ يَقْرَضُ الْمَلَأَى غَيْرَ
 الْعُدُومِ وَالْوَفَى غَيْرَ الظُّلُومِ قَالَ وَ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ فِي كُلِّ يَوْمٍ مِنْ شَهْرِ رَمَضَانَ عِنْدَ
 الْإِفْطَارِ أَلْفَ أَلْفٍ عَشِيْقٍ مِنَ النَّارِ كُلُّهُمْ قَدْ اسْتَوْجَبُوا النَّارَ فَإِذَا كَانَ آخِرُ يَوْمٍ
 مِنْ شَهْرِ رَمَضَانَ اغْتَقَ اللَّهُ فِي ذَلِكَ الْيَوْمِ بِقَدْرِ مَا اغْتَقَ مِنْ أَوَّلِ الشَّهْرِ إِلَى
 آخِرِهِ وَإِذَا كَانَتْ لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ يَأْمُرُ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ جَبْرِئِيلَ فِيَهْبِطُ فِي كِبْكَبَةٍ مِنْ
 الْمَلَائِكَةِ وَمَعَهُمْ لَوَاءٌ أَخْضَرُ فَيَرْكُزُ اللَّوَاءَ عَلَى ظَهْرِ الْكُفَّةِ وَلَهُ مِائَةٌ جَنَاحٍ
 مِنْهَا جَنَاحَانِ لَا يَنْشُرُهُمَا إِلَّا فِي تِلْكَ اللَّيْلَةِ فَيَنْشُرُهُمَا فِي تِلْكَ اللَّيْلَةِ فَيَجَاوِزُ
 الْمَشْرِقَ إِلَى الْمَغْرِبِ فَيَحُثُّ جَبْرِئِيلُ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ الْمَلَائِكَةَ فِي هَذِهِ اللَّيْلَةِ
 فَيَسْلُمُونَ عَلَى كُلِّ قَائِمٍ وَقَاعِدٍ وَمُصَلٍّ وَذَاكِرٍ وَيُصَافِحُونَهُمْ وَيُؤْمِنُونَ عَلَى
 دُعَائِهِمْ حَتَّى يَطْلُعَ الْفَجْرُ فَإِذَا طَلَعَ الْفَجْرُ يُنَادِي جَبْرِئِيلُ مَعَاشِرَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ
 الرَّحِيلُ فَيَقُولُونَ يَا جَبْرِئِيلُ فَمَا صَنَعَ اللَّهُ فِي خَوَائِجِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ مِنْ أُمَّةِ أَحْمَدَ ﷺ
 فَيَقُولُ نَظَرَ اللَّهُ إِلَيْهِمْ فِي هَذِهِ اللَّيْلَةِ فَعَفَا عَنْهُمْ إِلَّا أَرْبَعَةً قُلْنَا يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ مَنْ
 هُمْ قَالَ رَجُلٌ مَدِينٌ خُمْرٌ وَ عَاقٌ لَوَالِدَيْنِهِ وَقَاطِعٌ رَحِمٍ وَمُشَاجِرٌ قُلْنَا يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ
 مَا الْمُشَاجِرُ قَالَ هُوَ الْمُصَارِمُ فَإِذَا كَانَتْ لَيْلَةُ الْفِطْرِ سُمِّيَتْ تِلْكَ اللَّيْلَةُ لَيْلَةُ
 الْجَائِزَةِ فَإِذَا كَانَتْ غَدَاةُ الْفِطْرِ بَعَثَ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ الْمَلَائِكَةَ فِي كُلِّ بِلَادٍ
 فِيَهْبِطُونَ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ فَيَقُومُونَ عَلَى أَقْوَامِ السُّكَّكِ فَيَنَادُونَ بِصَوْتٍ يَسْمَعُ مِنْ
 خَلْقِ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ إِلَّا الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسُ فَيَقُولُونَ يَا أُمَّةَ مُحَمَّدٍ أُخْرِجُوا إِلَى رَبِّ
 كَرِيمٍ يُعْطِي الْجَزِيلَ وَيَغْفِرُ عَنِ الْعَظِيمِ فَإِذَا بَرَزُوا إِلَى مُصَلَّاهُمْ فَيَقُولُ اللَّهُ عَزَّ
 وَجَلَّ لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ مَا جَزَاءُ الْأَجِيرِ إِذَا عَمِلَ عَمَلَهُ قَالَ فَيَقُولُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ إِلَهْنَا
 وَسَيِّدُنَا جَزَائُهُ أَنْ تُؤْفِقَهُ أَجْرُهُ قَالَ فَيَقُولُ فَإِنِّي أَشْهَدُكُمْ يَا مَلَائِكَتِي إِنِّي قَدْ

جَعَلْتُ ثَوَابَهُمْ مِنْ صِيَامِهِمْ شَهْرَ رَمَضَانَ وَرِيَّائِهِمْ رِضَائِي وَمَغْفِرَتِي وَيَقُولُ
يَا عِبَادِي سَلُونِي فَوْعَزْتِي وَجَلَالِي لَا تَسْتَلُونِي الْيَوْمَ شَيْئًا فِي جَمْعِكُمْ لِأَعْرِبَكُمْ
إِلَّا أَغْطِيَتْكُمْ وَلَا لِدُنْيَاكُمْ إِلَّا نَظَرْتُ لَكُمْ فَوْعَزْتِي لِأَسْتَرْنَ عَلَيْكُمْ غَطَائِكُمْ
مَا رَأَيْتُمُونِي وَعِزَّتِي وَجَلَالِي لَا أُخْزِيَكُمْ وَلَا أَفْضِيْكُمْ بَيْنَ أَصْحَابِ الْحُدُودِ
فَانْصَرِفُوا مَغْفُورًا لَكُمْ قَدْ أَرْضَيْتُمُونِي وَرَضِيْتُ عَنْكُمْ فَتَفْرَحُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ
وَتُسْتَبَشِّرُ بِمَا يُعْطَى اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ هَذِهِ الْأُمَّةُ إِذَا أَفْطَرُوا مِنْ شَهْرِ رَمَضَانَ

كذا في الترغيب وقال رواه الشيخ بن حبان في كتاب الثواب والبيهقي واللفظ له وليس في إسناده من
أجمع على ضعفه قلت قال السيوطي في التدريب قد التزم البيهقي أن لا يخرج في تصانيفه حديثا يعلمه
موضوعا الخ ، وذكر القاري في المرقاة بعض طرق الحديث ثم قال : فاختلف ، طرق الحديث يدل على
أن له أصلا اهـ

HADITH NO. 4

Ibn Abbaas رضي الله عنه says that he heard our Nabi صلى الله عليه وسلم say, Verily Jannah becomes perfumed with the sweetest fragrance in Ramadhaan. From the beginning of the year till the end, it is being brightly decorated for the coming of this blessed month. And when the first night of Ramadhaan appears, a wind blows from beneath the Ar-sh (Throne). It is called Mutheerah, and causes the leaves of the trees of Jannah to rustle and door handles to sound, where by setting forth such a melodious sound as had never been heard before. The dark eyed damsels of Jannah then step forth till they appear in the centre of the balconies of Jannah, exclaiming: Is there anyone making duaa' to Allah for us that Allah may join us in marriage to him?" Then these damsels call out: "O Ridhwaan, keeper of Jannah, what night is this?" He replies: "Labbaik, this is indeed the first night of Ramadhaan, when the doors of Jannah are opened to those who observe the fast from among the ummah of Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم". Rasulullah صلى الله عليه وسلم further said, Allah says, "O Ridhwaan open the doors of Jannah, and O Maalik, (keeper of Jahannam) close the doors of Jahannam for those who fast from among the ummah of Ahmad "O Jibraeel proceed down to the earth and bind the rebellious shay'taans, put them in chains and cast them in the oceans so that they make no mischief, thereby spoiling the fast of the ummah of My beloved Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم".

Allah commands a caller from the heavens to call out three times on every one of the nights of Ramadhān: "Is there anyone begging of Me that I may grant him his desire? Is there anyone repenting to me that I may turn in mercy to him? Is there anyone begging for forgiveness that I may forgive him? Who is there who shall give a loan to the One whose wealth does not diminish, and the One who duly fulfills without unjust deductions".

Rasulullah ﷺ said further, "every day at the time of if'taar Allah sets free a thousand thousand (one million) souls from the fire of Jahannam, all of whom had already earned entrance into Jahannam. On the last night He sets free as many as had been set free throughout the month. On the night of Laylatul Qadr Allah commands Jibraeel A.S. to descend to the earth with the group of Malaa'ikah (angels). They descend carrying a green flag which is then planted on top of the Kaabah. Jibraeel A.S. himself has one hundred wings; two of which are only spread out on this night. He spreads out these wings so that their width extends from East to West. Jibraeel A.S. then sends out the Malaa'ikah on this night in all directions to recite salaam upon each and everybody they find in prayer or sitting, performing 'salaah and celebrating the praise of Allah. They shake hands with them and say Aameen to all their duaa's until dawn breaks. When dawn comes Jibraeel A.S. calls out; Depart O Malaa'ikah of Allah depart".

The Malaa'ikah then inquire: "O Jibraeel but what did Allah do regarding the needs of the faithful ones from among the ummah of Ahmad ﷺ put before Him? Jibraeel A.S. replies: "Allah looked at them with mercy and pardoned them all except four kinds of people".

There upon we the sahaabahs inquired: "Who are they, O Rasulullah?" Rasulullah ﷺ replied, "They are the ones addicted to wine drinking, those disobedient to their parents, those who cut themselves from their near relatives and the "Mushaahin. We inquired, "O Rasulullah ﷺ who is a Mushaahin?" He said: Those who harbour ill-feelings in their hearts against their fellow brethren and break off relations with them".

"And then night of 'Iydul Fitr, the night that is called Laylatul Jaa'izah, (The night of prize giving), comes along. On the morning of 'Iyd Allah sends down the Malaa'ikah to all the lands of the earth where they take their positions

at access points of roads, calling out with a voice that is heard by all except man and jinn.

“O Ummah of Muḥammad ﷺ, come forth from your houses towards a Lord that is noble and gracious, who grants much and pardons the major sins”. When they proceed towards the places for their ‘Iyd ‘salaah, Allah says to the Malaa’ikah: “What indeed is the reward of that employee who had rendered his services?” The Malaa’ikah replies, “O Lord and master, it is only right that he should receive his reward in full for his services”. Allah then says, “I call you to witness, O My Malaa’ikah, that for their having fasted during the month of Ramadhaan, and for their having stood before Me in prayer by night, I have granted to them as reward My pleasure and have granted them forgiveness. O My servants ask now of Me, for I swear by My honour and My greatness, that whatsoever you shall beg of Me this day in this assembly of yours for the needs of the Hereafter, I shall grant you; and whatsoever you shall ask for worldly needs, I shall look at you favourably. By My honour I swear, as long as you shall obey My commands, I shall cover your faults. By My Honour and My Greatness do I swear that I shall never disgrace you among the evil-doing ones and disbelievers. Depart now from here, you are forgiven. You have pleased Me and I am pleased with you.

The Malaa’ikah on seeing this great reward bestowed by Allah upon the ummah of Muḥammad ﷺ on the day of I’ydul Fitr become greatly pleased and happy”.

As reported in Targheeb.

“O Allah, make us also of those fortunate ones, Aameen”.

COMMENTARY

The previous pages of this book already dealt with almost all that is contained in this last long Hadith. A few points need attention. We see here that there are a few people who are deprived of forgiveness in Ramadhaan and are unfortunate indeed in not being able to share the great gifts of Allah on the morning of ‘Iyd. Among them are those who fight and argue among themselves and those disobedient to their parents.

Let us put one question to them: "You have displeased Allah and having done so, what other refuge do you have besides Allah?" We feel indeed sad that for some reason or other you have made yourselves the target for the curse of Allah, His Rasool ﷺ and Jibraeel A.S. while at the same excluded from Allahs freely granted forgiveness. Who else can grant you refuge? Who and what can stand by your side when you carry the curse of Rasulullah ﷺ? Who can help you when Allah's close angel Jibraeel A.S. has made dua'a' against you? While Allah is excluding you for His forgiveness and mercy. I implore you my dear brother (and sister) think about your position at this moment. Think and desist from all that draws you away from Allah. There is time to repair and repent and now is that time. Tomorrow you shall have to stand before a Judge before whom no rank, honour, position and wealth shall avail you. A Judge before whom only actions shall count and Who is indeed aware of our every movement. Remember that Allah may forgive our faults as far as our relationship with Him is concerned, but will not forgive without penalty our faults in our relations with our fellowmen.

Rasulullah ﷺ said, "The bankrupt one from among my Ummah is that person, who shall appear on the day of Qiyaamah, bringing with him righteous deeds like 'salaah, sown (fast) and charity. However he had also sworn at someone, falsely accused someone else and hurt someone, with the result that all these people shall come forward with the action against him, bearing witness against him. As a penalty, his good deeds shall be taken away and granted to the afflicted ones. And when his good deeds shall come to an end, in this manner, their sins shall be thrown upon him (when he is not able to pay the full penalty through lack of good deeds). Hence, in this manner he shall enter Jahannam'. So we see inspite of many good deeds his regret and sorry state is beyond description. (O Allah save us from that).

Another point is worth emphasising in this connection. Numerous times we have read about so many occasions and deeds which become the reason for forgiveness. The question now arises that when forgiveness is being granted why should it be granted time and again? In other words, once a person had been forgiven there are no sins left on him.

So why is forgiveness granted again? The answer is that when forgiveness comes to a person with sins on him, it will mean those sins are wiped off but when he has no sin it will mean that mercy and favour is granted to him. A further interesting point to note is that Allah time and again calls the Malaa'ikah to witness. The question may arise why is that so? Here one should bear in mind that the affairs of Qiyaamah at the time of reckoning have been set, so that a witness shall be brought forward to testify. Hence Ambiya A.S. shall be required to bring witnesses as to whether they had delivered the message. Very often our Nabi ﷺ used to say, "Verily you shall be asked about me (and my mission). So bear witness that I did deliver the message."

In Bukhari we read a Hadith: "On the day of Qiyaamah Nooh A.S. shall be called and asked, "Did you deliver the message in the proper manner?" He shall reply, "Yes I did". Then his ummah shall be asked, "Did he deliver the message?" They shall reply,

مَا جَاءَنَا مِنْ بَشِيرٍ وَلَا نَذِيرٍ

"No, neither did a bringer of glad tidings come to us nor did the warner". Thereupon Nooh A.S. shall be called to bring a witness. He shall call upon Muhammad and his Ummah. This Ummah shall be called forward and they shall testify (as to the truth of Nooh alayhis salaam's evidence).

In some versions of this Hadith this ummah shall be cross questioned, "How do you know that Nooh alayhis salaam did deliver the commands of Allah, (When you were not present at the time?)" They shall reply, "Our Nabi ﷺ informed us of that".

In this same manner all the Ambiyaa shall be questioned. For this the Qur'aan Karim says,

وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا لِتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ

"Thus we made an ummah, justly balanced, that you might be witnesses over the nations".

(Suratul Baqarah: 143)

Imaama Raazi R.A. writes that on the day of Qiyaamah there shall be four types of witnesses:

1. The Malaa'ikah. The Qur'aan says:

وَجَاءَتْ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَعَهَا سَائِقٌ وَشَهِيدٌ ،

- 1.1. "Not a word does he utter but there is a Sentinel by him ready (to note)". (Surah Quaf: 18)

مَا يَلْفِظُ مِنْ قَوْلٍ إِلَّا لَدَيْهِ رَقِيبٌ عَتِيدٌ ،

- 1.2. "And there will come forth every soul, with each will be (an angel) to bear witness".

(Surah Quaf: 21)

وَأَنَّ عَلَيْكُمْ لَحَافِظِينَ كِرَامًا كَاتِبِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ مَا تَفْعَلُونَ

- 1.3. "But verily over you (are appointed angels) to protect you, kind and honourable, writing down your deeds, that they know and understand all that you do".

(Surah Infi'taar: 10, 11 & 12)

2. The Ambiyaa. The Qur'aan says:

وَكُنْتُ عَلَيْهِمْ شَهِيدًا مَا دُمْتُ فِيهِمْ

- 2.1. "And I was a witness over them while I dwelt among them". (Surah Al Maa'idah: 117)

فَكَيْفَ إِذَا جِئْنَا مِنْ كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ بِشَهِيدٍ وَجِئْنَاكَ عَلَى هَؤُلَاءِ شَهِيدًا

- 2.2. "And how shall it be when we shall bring forth every nation with its witness, and shall bring you forth, O prophet, as witness over these (the ummah)?" (Surah An Nisaa': 41)

3. The ummah of Muhammad ﷺ the following verse refers to this:

وَجِئْتُ بِالْبَشِيرِ وَالشَّهِيدِ

3.1. "The Prophets and the witnesses will be brought forward". (Surah Az-zumar: 69)

4. The part of man's body. Thus the Qur'aan states:

الْيَوْمَ نَخِمْ عَلَى أَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَلَكَلَّمْنَا أَيْدِيَهُمُ الْآيَةَ

4.1. "That day we set a seal on their mouths; but their hands will speak to us and their feet bear witness to all they did". (Surah Yaaseen: 65)

The last Hadith under discussion also brings out one joyous message to the fortunate ones. Allah says that He shall not disgrace and humiliate those who performed their duties in front of (and among) the unbelievers and evil doers. This is the enormous extent of Allah's grace and kindness and also the regard Allah shows for the status of the muslims. In addition for those who sought Allah's pleasure another of His blessing and favour is that their faults and sins on this occasion will also be covered.

Abdullah ibn 'Umar رضي الله عنه reports that Rasulullah ﷺ said, "On the day of Qiyaamah Allah shall call a believer to draw near to Him. A curtain shall be drawn so that none may see. Allah shall then remind him of each and every fault of his which he shall be obliged to admit. Seeing the great amount of his faults, that person shall feel that he had indeed failed and shall perish. But then Allah say: "In the world did I cover your faults and today too do I hide them and forgive them for you". Thereafter his book of good deeds shall be given to him.

The contents of this Hadith is contained in so many other Ahaadith as well. One should therefore be careful of not humiliating and attacking the righteous ones for their faults, because it is possible that their faults are forgiven. It is also possible that we may be the real loser through backbiting and jeering at those who in their own manner seek to please Allah. It is possible that Allah may cover their faults and forgive them through the blessings of their other good deeds, while we, who continue to backbite, scoff and jeer at them, may be the cause of our own destruction.

(May Allah in His Mercy pardon us all).

This Hadith also states that the night before the day of

'Iyd is called the night of prize giving, the night when Allah gives the true reward. This night too should be properly appreciated. It is also common that once the announcement has been made that tomorrow is 'Iyd, majority of us even the pious, on this night enjoy ourselves in sleep, whereas this too is a night that should be spent in 'ibaadah, Rasulullah ﷺ said, "Whoever remains awake (for 'ibaadah) on the nights preceding both 'Iyd's with the aim of gaining reward, his heart shall not die on that day when hearts shall die". The meaning here is that at the time when evil will have taken possession of all, his heart shall stay alive (guarded against evil). It may also refer to the time when the bugle shall be blown to herald the day of Qiyaamah. On that day his soul shall not become unconscious.

Rasulullah ﷺ is also reported to have said, "Whoever stays awake for 'ibaadah on the following five nights, entrance into Jannah becomes waajib for him, Laylatul Tarwiyah: (the night preceding the eight of Zil Hijjah), Laylatul Arafah (the night preceding the ninth Zil Hijjah), Laylatul Nahr (the night preceding the tenth Zil Hijjah), the night preceding 'Iydu'l Fitr and the night preceding the fifteenth of Shabaan.

The jurists of Islaam have written that it is mustahab to remain in 'ibaadah on the nights preceding 'Iyd. It is reported in 'Maathabaṭa bis sunnah from Imaam Shaa-iy R.A. that there are five nights in which dua'a's are accepted; The night preceding Friday, the night preceding both 'Iyds, the first night of Rajab, and Laylatul Bara-a'h (fifteenth of Shabaan).

Among the pious in Islaam, it is said that because of the exceptional greatness of Friday night, one should spend this night in 'ibaadah during the month of Ramadhaan. But there are some Ahaadith wherein we have been prohibited from fixing only that night for 'ibaadah, it is best that one or two other nights should be joined with it.

I have now come to the end of this book, in conclusion, hoping that this shall be of benefit to those who seek Allah's pleasure. I beg and implore all readers to make dua'a' for me, the humble writer of these pages, during those special hours of Ramadhaan. It is possible that because of your dua'a's Allah Ta-aa'la bestows His happiness and love upon me too, Aameen.

Readers are humbly requested to also include in their duaa's the founder, past and present staff, pupils and associates of this Institute.

**Muhammad Zakariyya Kandhlawy
Resident at Madrasah Mazahir Uloom
Saharanpur-U.P. India
27th Ramadhaan, 1349 Hijri.**